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'THE ANDROZANI EFFECT': IS IT FADING AWAY?

SAVE 'WHO FUND – FULL DETAILS

Editorial address:
P.O.Box 1015, Brighton BN2 2YU

AS 1992 looms ever nearer, next month will include full details of how to re-subscribe to what will prove to be a very eventful twelve months in DWB's history. Early next year will mark the publication of the 100th issue, and we would like your suggestions on how we should celebrate this occasion (and even whether you think it's an event worth celebrating!). We already have a couple of ideas lined up, one of which will involve a potentially major revamp based almost exclusively on the results derived from the 'DWB: Towards 100' readers poll, the form for which will appear next issue. It will be interesting to see what the response to this will be like and whether the recent acceleration in reader participation was just a temporary blip or is here to stay, but suffice to say that if you want to play an active part in helping to shape the future of DWB then don't miss this opportunity! Now, how many other magazines allow their readership such an influential rôle...

Some good news for American readers is that the cost to them of DWB will be falling to the level of 1990's rates thanks to the healthier exchange rate between our two currencies, and for UK readers the cost will be rising just slightly to £1.99 for the standard issues and to £3.60 for the specials, which is well below the level of inflation. This is thanks to an influx of new readers who have helped to offset recent escalating price rises in postage and productions costs. Current subscribers will receive a new set of subscription labels with the next DWB which will contain full details on how to re-subscribe, which we would ask everyone to do a.s.a.p. to aid the smooth running of the administration involved in processing your renewals.

Finally this month, the obligatory corrections for a couple of errors appearing in the previous issue: The heading on page 17 should of course read "Nimoy Two-Parter" (damn our typesetters!). On page 20 the 2nd and 3rd photos appear in the wrong order, and the last line of the description on page 19 should have read "Dry ice was used to create a smoke-like effect to enhance the model (centre)". A couple of Ian Scoone's quotes also appeared to end abruptly although these were just one word on each occasion ("were" on page 18, column 3, and "them" on page 19, last column). These mistakes are rather embarrassing to correct, though do bear in mind that the last three issues have been produced and published all within just three weeks of each other, so errors are perhaps inevitable.

'Til next month,

GARY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: W.H.Allen, BBC Picture Publicity, Jeremy Bentham, Anthony Clark, Tony Clark, Paul Cornell, Simeon Hearn, Allan Jeffries, Peter Linford, Amanda Murray, Alister Pearson, Ty Power, Philip Robinson, Ian Scoones, Kathleen Toth, Mark Wright.

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See last issue or send an SAE to the editorial address (above). Deadline for next issue is October 14th.

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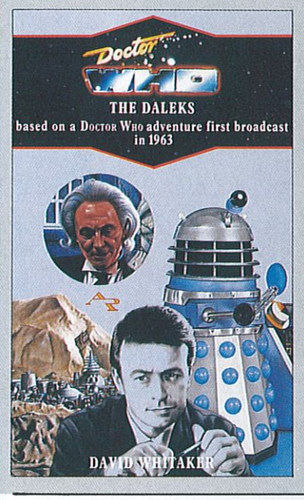
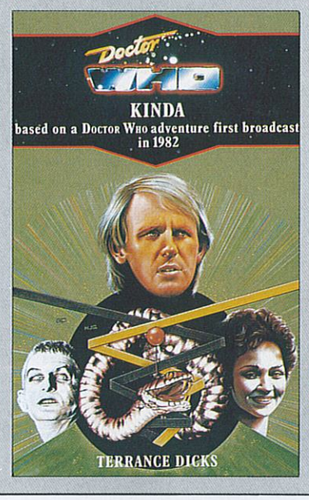
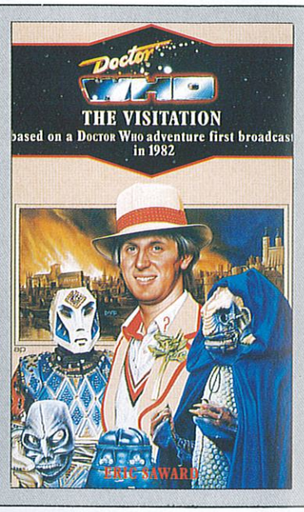
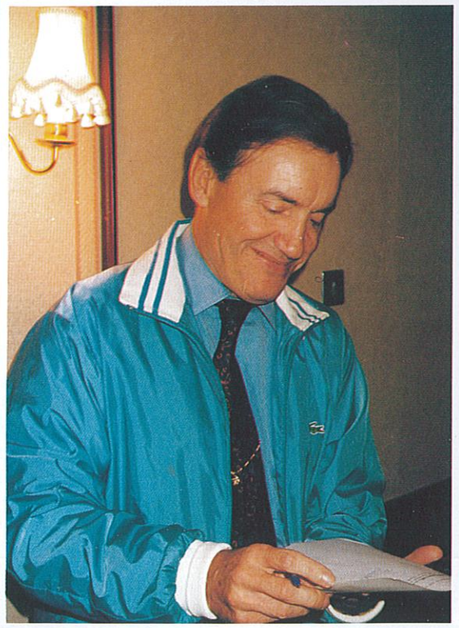






AMIABLE AINLEY A HUGE SUCCESS AT NEBULA '91



HELD Over the weekend of September 14-15th by MLG Promotions, this year's Nebula was, like its numerous predecessors, the subject of a great deal of hype and publicity. However, having never attended one of these annual events before, I was a little dubious as to whether or not it would live up to the high standards and expectations set by previous events.

I'm glad to say that it certainly lived up to the publicity, and perhaps even set a few new precedents for future conventions. The most prominent guests of the weekend had to be Anthony Ainley, Sylvester McCoy and Sophie Aldred, with the former being something of a coup marking Ainley's first UK appearance in eight years, and very entertaining he was too.

'Ant' got himself right into the convention swing of things as early as the Friday evening preceding the convention, when he could be seen hob-nobbing with other guests and convention attendees alike in the hotel, chatting to them with an interest and enthusiasm that is rarely seen in other, less prominent and, dare one say, more pretentious 'star' guests. He even went so far as to help some small children choose their breakfast cereal the following morning (if you believe all the convention gossip...). During the weekend he related many interesting anecdotes to a 400-strong and enthusiastic audience, and generally appeared to have quite a good time himself, especially when he realised that he was in close-up on the video screen behind him and promptly decided to deliver several devilish chuckles and the odd demonic expression that were so archetypal of his Master.

Sophie and Sylvester didn't really have anything new to say but they were, as usual, entertaining to listen to, and a nice little touch to Sylvester's panel at the end of the weekend was that he actually left the stage with his microphone and entered the delighted audience to listen to their questions and answer them person to person. It has to be said, though, that from the moment he entered he was very much 'in character' and wasn't really being Sylvester McCoy, which might have made for a more interesting panel.

Paul Darrow and Michael Keating might sound like strange choices for a 'Doctor Who' convention, but they were two of the more interesting guests of the weekend. They make an excellent double-act, but as on television Keating seems to be forever eclipsed by Darrow's shadow. They chatted about their respective 'Who rôles but 'Blake's 7' dominated the conversation. This was a pleasant change to the typical 'Who-based event and highlights the current trend where more 'Doctor Who' fans have thankfully abandoned their purist philosophies to compensate for the lack of new material on air at the moment.

Mary Tamm (pictured left with Ainley and Aldred) made a rather brief appearance on the Saturday morning and was quite engaging and full of interesting tales. However she didn't really stand out as much as the guests mentioned above, and the same could be said for the likes of JNT, John Freeman, David Banks, Nicholas Courtney and Frazer Hines in that although they have a lot to say, they do seem to attend an awful lot of conventions and when watching them you begin to have a tremendous feeling of 'seen it all before'.

Nicola Bryant was conspicuous by her absence as she was advertised as a confirmed guest with a rather sexist shot of her in a bikini in the convention booklet, but one of the more surprising line-ups was the Virgin Books panel comprising Terrance Dicks, Nigel Robinson, Paul Cornell and Peter Darvill-Evans - the only panel of the weekend able to divulge news of any original 'Doctor Who' output.

Nick Pegg and Gary Russell took turns at presenting and a very good job of it they made too, although several panels did seem stuck for original questions from the audience which seemed to alternate between the slightly boring and painfully predictable ("What's your favourite story?") to the sublimely stupid ("When you told the first Doctor, in 'The Five Doctors', that you were at the Academy with the Master, what did you study?"). The latter was addressed to a rather bemused Sylvester McCoy who speedily and sensibly moved on.

The Saturday night cabaret was a little dull, mostly consisting of a play - Whoncock's Half Hour I believe was the title. A humorous skit on sixties radio plays, it seemed to lack something and was just too slapstick for my liking.

All in all, though, Nebula '91 had a great atmosphere and was well worth the trip down to Liverpool. A lot of thought and effort had obviously been put into the whole event, unlike many conventions, by everyone involved - both behind the scenes and on-stage - so well done to MLG and to co-organisers Graeme Wood and Bill Cook.

AMANDA MURRAY

MLG are planning two one-day 'theme' events for 1992 to be held in London and Liverpool, and the next weekend event will be in Liverpool over the Easter Bank Holiday weekend in 1993.

THERE IS A TIME for words and a time for deeds. Ever since its un-announced conclusion in 1989, debates concerning 'Doctor Who's' future have generated endless phonecalls, features on TV and radio, platformed campaigns and whole forests of magazines, letters and articles on the subject.

Through the medium of the BBC's own Press Office, we are told that the show is safe in their hands. We are told the Corporation is merely resting the show while planning its future through the Nineties. We are told that tenders from independent production companies are being actively sought and considered. And yet, two years on from the close of production of **Ghost Light**, what real forward progress has been made?

In a word, none!

Doctor Who does not appear on any of the BBC schedules for next year. All the tenders by independent companies have been turned down, and if Alan Ayres - the BBC's drama publicity officer - is to be believed, the Corporation will not bring the series back "...until it's a vibrant addition to the schedules. No-one wants a battle-weary Time Lord languishing in the backwaters of audience appreciation".

That latter quote almost beggars belief. If proof need be sought that **Doctor Who** is still both vibrant and appreciated, just look at the number of independent companies who have bid to make the new series, many of them award-winning companies like Zenith and Saffron. Look at sales of the BBC videos, consistently reaching the top spots with every release. Look at the book sales. John Peel's **Timewyrm: Genesys** is on its third printing already. Look at the exhibition at the MOMI. Since the **Doctor Who** exhibits opened there in July, takings at the MOMI Bookshop have gone up a staggering fifty percent! Not bad for a battle-weary Time Lord living in a recession, eh?

Of course no-one disputes that the last season was poorly rated. Four million viewers is not a good figure, although one has to ask what the total might have been had the series not been ranged against the all-conquering Coronation Street, and bearing in mind also that nowhere near as many people watch television in the Nineties as did in the Sixties and Seventies. Even so, **Doctor Who** has had periods of poor ratings in the past. The final year of William Hartnell's tenure saw a big slump in viewers, as did the last few stories of Patrick Troughton's Doctor. In both instances recovery was just a matter of the injection of new blood to the series.

So the argument for not making **Doctor Who** on quality grounds just will not wash. Any perceived fault lies with individual stories, or groups thereof. It does not lie with the basic concept of the series - and the BBC knows that.

They know it because people have been writing telling them so. They know it because a "Day of Action" last November netted hundreds upon hundreds of phone calls to their switch-board. They know it because they have had to return literally thousands of £5 cheques from concerned followers anxious that a new series be made.

The crux of the problem is that the weight of all these campaigns and demonstrations has only been felt by staff employees and, at best, middle management at the BBC. The irony here is that most of them agree it would be a good idea to make **Doctor Who**, if only on the irrefutable grounds that **Doctor Who** costs less to make than it earns in revenue. The big decision-makers, however, the ones who reside on the sixth floor at Television Centre, remain untouched by all this activity.

Put simply, despite commercial success, a proven track record and an inviolate position as a flagship of popular viewing culture, Jonathan Powell and his fellow BBC department heads have, as at September 1991, no plans to bring back a new series of **Doctor Who.**

This I now find unacceptable. Words have failed, so hence the need for deeds.

THE STRATEGY

Back in August a confederation of what could be called "elder statesmen fans" got together to work out a strategy for instituting legal proceedings against the BBC for failing to make **Doctor Who.** The impetus for this unique action is John Major's "Citizen's Charter" bill which, at its heart, seeks to establish a stronger accountability of public corporations to their customers.

It is an enormous undertaking, but with the BBC's charter coming up for renewal in 1995, John Giacobbi of Entertainment Law Associates, the firm of lawyers approached to handle proceedings, believes there is a strong case to answer.

"We intend to prove that there is a fiduciary relationship, a trust, between the BBC and license payers", Giacobbi told The Independent, "Meaning that the BBC is directly funded by public money and is therefore responsible to the public for the best use of those monies".

Funding a court case of this nature will initially require around several thousands of pounds to cover the costs and legal fees involved. To achieve this sum means asking for support from **every single 'Doctor Who' fan worldwide** who believes, as I earnestly do, that the series can again have a future as bright as anything that has gone before. It is a push both for quality and quantity; a drive to restore **Doctor Who**'s flagship status in the eyes of the Corporation as well as the viewers and fans.

Raising that sum will be done by staging a number of fund-raising events, the first of which will be a mega-raffle, to be drawn sometime in the new year. The prizes will be considerable and in many cases unique. I myself am donating Malcolm Hulke's original rehearsal script for part 10 of **The War Games**, plus an original 1963 Lime Grove Studio D floor plan from **The Daleks.** A top prize, however, will be a genuine Cyberman head from **Tomb of the Cybermen** (opposite page), one of the ten originally constructed for **The Moonbase** in 1967. And many more prizes are being assembled by the confederation even now.

Tickets for the raffle are £5 and there is no limit to the number of tickets you can hold. My task is to be the Treasurer of this raffle, and so for full details see any of the upcoming national advertisements or write to me, **Jeremy Bentham, at 13 Northfield Road, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire WD6 4AE. IMPORTANT! Mark your envelope "Raffle Enquiry" and enclose a self-addressed envelope, stamped or, if** >

ALISTER PEARSON has been keeping busy of late with his reprint covers. 'The Daleks' and 'Nightmare Fair' are out in January, followed by 'Kinda' and 'The Visitation' a month later. He has also completed new covers for 'Arc of Infinity', 'Mawdryn Undead', 'Earthshock' and 'The Awakening', the latter two of which he had with him to display at Nebula (left).

He is currently working on BBC Video's 'Robot' while Andrew Skilleter appears to have won the commission for the coveted 'Caves of Androzani' cover, both out in January.

Jean Marc L'Officier's 'The Terrestrial Index' goes on sale in November, together with reprints of 'Delta and the Bannermen' and 'Dragonfire' with their old covers.

writing from abroad, enclose two International Postal Reply Coupons.

Never has the future of **Doctor Who** been more in doubt, but neither has the opportunity to do something about it been so great. Please help us, for to quote the Duke of Forgill, "The task is challenging, but not impossible!"

Jeremy Bentham, October 1991

*THIS ARTICLE will also be appearing in issue 180 of 'Doctor Who Magazine'.

'EARTHSHOCK' HELMET DONATED TO RAFFLE

Shortly after the above was written we received confirmation of three more genuine props from the series' past which have been anonymously donated to the **Save 'Who Fund.** They are a Marshman's foot from **Full Circle,** a fibre-glass Time Lord headpiece from **The Invasion of Time** and an original Cybermen helmet from **Earthshock!**

STOP PRESS: LETTERS TO THE B B C ARE "BINNED"!

An undisclosed BBC source has made a disturbing claim that mail sent to BBC TV Centre regarding **Doctor Who** is being automatically redirected to BBC Enterprises where it is being destroyed! This is believed to have included thousands of enquiries about **Doctor Who's** future, as well as **personal mail** intended for members of the last production team.

The validity of this accusation is currently being investigated, and if true could have grave consequences for what is supposedly a 'public' corporation. Certainly it would provide further fuel to the campaign.

If true it would also cast doubts on the effectiveness of a new co-ordinated DWAS letter-writing campaign which the society is asking all major fan bodies to participate in. DWB will carry the full details of their strategy next issue.

'WHO CLASSICS ON AUDIO NEXT YEAR

BBC Radio Collection are set to release a series of 'Doctor Who' soundtracks from next year.

The first two titles selected are **The Evil of the Daleks** and **The Tomb of the Cybermen.** John Nathan-Turner has been employed to edit the original recordings and to script the necessary narration that will be required to ensure the stories flow smoothly in audio form. He has already spoken to Frazer Hines about the possibility of him being involved in the project.

The 1967 recordings which are being used are said to be of good quality although there are some slight faults and the speed needs correcting.

This series should go some way towards appeasing the enormous hole left by the BBC's mass purging of many **Doctor Who** episodes from the '60s.

REPEATS?

ACCORDING to the BBC's programme planning department, a slot is currently being considered for repeats of 'Doctor Who' early next year!

Two complete seasons of **Doctor Who** "filmed at Lime Grove" have been mooted, the department claims, which would mean repeats from the black and white era - from which no complete seasons exist!

PILOT REPEAT A HIT ON 2!

While the probability of a repeat season remains dubious, BBC2 are reportedly surprised and delighted at the success of their recent Lime Grove day-long tribute, not least with the performance of **Doctor Who's** Pilot Episode which garnered 1.7 million viewers - an astounding achievement for a programme shown on BBC2 on a hot summer's afternoon!

While the prospect of **Doctor Who** repeats on BBC1 may seem bleak, BBC2 could prove more likely...

INNES LLOYD'S last film, A Question Of Attribution, will soon be shown in the BBC's Screen One season.

THE MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE has announced that due to overwhelming success, the 'Doctor Who' 'Behind the Sofa' exhibition is to be extended until the first week in January.

Jon Pertwee has been announced as the special guest for the second MOMI weekend event titled 'A History of Doctor Who' on November 2-3rd. Tickets cost £30 for the weekend.

BBC VIDEO have had to make slight amendments to next year's schedule of 'Doctor Who' releases due to some clearance problems. 'Robot' and 'Androzani' are definite for January, but March will now see 'Resurrection of the Daleks' and 'Attack of the Cybermen' with 'Image of the Fendahl' and 'Earthshock' in May. Complete changes to the schedule are planned thereafter.

LAST WORD from good ol' James:

Paul Austin, Suffolk (17-9-91)

IN The Independent newspaper of 14 September, a BBC spokesman was quoted thus: "the...last series of Doctor Who had only four million viewers. We can't bring it back until it's a vibrant addition to the schedules."

So there we have it. Plainly and simply, the BBC is no longer making **Doctor Who** because not enough people watch it. But the BBC is a public service broadcaster and thus ratings should not come into it. Unlike ITV, the BBC does not need to attract advertisers and therefore a programme with four million viewers should continue. When **Doctor Who's** position in the schedules is put into perspective (i.e. opposite Coronation Street), then a figure of four million is actually quite a good performance.

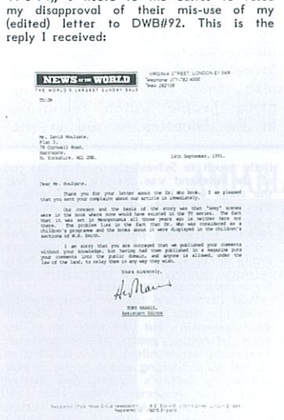
Public Service Broadcasting was defined by the Broadcasting Research Unit in 1985/6 as having eight basic principles, including catering for all interests and tastes, catering for minorities and for national identity and community. The interests and tastes of science fiction/fantasy fans is poorly catered for by the BBC, with **Star Trek - The Next Generation** on at a ridiculous time and the second series of **Quantum Leap** still unscreened at the time of writing. As for home-produced SF, this is non-existent on the BBC. Are **Doctor Who** fans a minority? If so, we are certainly not catered for by the BBC! The series is a British institution, a cliché I know, but nevertheless it has formed an important and integral part of British television over the last twenty-seven years. Television schedules without **Doctor Who** are just not the same.

The Day of Action was certainly well intended, but it did little more than to remind the BBC that there were people who wanted a new series. It was an annoyance to the BBC, but did not force them to do anything. However with this new action, if the BBC loses in court it may well have no choice but to bring the programme back. My only concern is that, in a revenge move, they will appoint Pip and Jane Baker as the new producers and ask Bonnie Langford to play the first ever female Doctor in the new series...

'NEWS OF THE WORLD' REPLIES

David Houlgate, North Yorkshire (21-9-91)

Having read the 'Sexterminate Him' etc. article in the News of the World (dated 11-8-91), I wrote to the editor to voice my disapproval of their mis-use of my (edited) letter to DWB#92. This is the reply I received:



NEWS OF THE WORLD

VIRGINIA STREET, LONDON E1 9XR
Telephone 071-782 4000
Telex 262109

14th September, 1991.

Dear Mr. Houlgate,

Thank you for your letter about the Dr. Who book. I am pleased that you sent your complaint about our article so immediately.

Our concern and the basis of the story was that "heavy" scenes were in the programme which were not suitable for children. The fact that it was set in Pennsylvania all those years ago is neither here nor there. The problem lies in the fact that Dr. Who was considered as a children's programme and the books about it were displayed in the children's sections of W.H. Smith.

I am sorry that you are outraged that we published your comments without your knowledge, but having had them published in a magazine pure your comments into the public domain. Everyone is allowed, under the law of the land, to relay them in any way they wish.

Yours sincerely,

Hugh Marnham

TONY HARRIS,
Assistant Editor

Firstly I'd be interested to hear your comments regarding the final paragraph and your copyright. Secondly I'd like to draw Peter Darvill-Evans' attention (I know he reads DWB) to the last sentence of paragraph two. I'm no prude, but **Genesys** should not be on display in the children's book section. If the claim is correct, Virgin should be making this clear to bookshops.

ED: They acted quite lawfully in extracting the quotes for their article. They can only be criticised for their lack of courtesy in not alerting any of the parties concerned of their intention, a habit for which the paper is renowned.

LATE VIEWS ON DWB#93

Tim Munro, West Yorkshire (16-9-91)

Gosh. DWB#93. One of your best yet! Maybe even the best you've ever done. Certainly it was packed full of diverse, thought-provoking, meaty material, the best of which was Nick Pegg's breathtaking review of **The Sontaran Experiment/Genesis of the Daleks** video release, particularly his views on the latter. That article has simply got to be one of the most elegant, perceptive and articulate pieces of writing ever to grace DWB, and wins the **Genesis** debate hands down over Peter Linford's rather nit-picking critique which, by comparison, seemed very superficial and calculated to justify by any means - no matter how trivial - at his disposal, Peter's instinctive dislike of the story. That said, it was an inspired idea to present two such conflicting views of the same story and made for fascinating reading.

Elsewhere, I found the News of the World thing hysterically funny. Great Heavens, it's straight out of Hot Metal! "Fans zap porno Time Lord indeed! I can just **hear** Robert Hardy's Russell Spam reading it out! What next? Will Messrs Dicks, Robinson and Cornell shortly be accosted by "Greg Kettle, 'Er Majesty's Press"?! Seriously, though, it is a disgrace that quotes were not merely lifted from DWB without permission, but were used - as far as I could see - completely out of context to portray **Doctor Who** fans as a bunch of uptight prudes and prissy adolescent Mary Whitehouses outraged by the corruption of the purity of a series which the News of the World seems to regard as a close relative of Scooty and Play School. This is just wrong. As one of the anti-**Genesys** brigade, I have nothing against the concept of adult 'Who, infact I have been advocating a move in that direction for years, and have written plenty of the stuff myself! What I, and so far as I can see most of Mr. Peel's critics, object to is how offensively badly-written and leeringly, voyeuristically juvenile is **Genesys'** so-called "adult" content. The disgracefully misleading use of the photo of Sylvester was also well out of order, but then I suppose we can expect little better of the gutter rag rightly dubbed by Private Eye "The News of the Screws" (betcha they don't lift **this** quote!). The almost universal praise heaped on Mr. Dicks's stunning masterpiece, **Exodus,** must've come as a bitter disappointment to these seedy hacks, who were probably already planning a sequel: "TV DOCTOR'S NAZI HORROR SHOCK! TODLERS TERRIFIED!" or something.

Moving on, the Classified List was fascinating. Whatever happened to Charlotte and Dennis Plummer from 1970? Surely not Pip'n'Jane in an earlier life? It's also interesting to see names like Eric Pringle's turning up in unexpected places (i.e. the Hinchcliffe era) and to note great writers who never got any further than a plot outline (i.e. Tanith Lee -sob!). And it certainly seems to give the lie to Eric Saward's assertion that JNT was very mean about commissioning scripts.

Andrew Pixley's **Chimera** review was spot-on. Personally I think that Steve Gallagher killed his chances stone dead in episode one. I mean, how d'you top an episode like **that**?! Answer - you can't. After that it was downhill all the way.

The **Star Cops** stuff was great and long overdue, and as for No Laughing Matter - at last! Somebody has rumbled what a fraud Jonathan Powell is, and how he lives off the superior talents of his predecessors. Now, how about an exposé of the pitiful decline of BBC1's drama output under his stewardship? Like, for instance, did you know that in Powell's tenureship as Controller, only **one** of his "major new drama series", Making Out, has ever gone to a third series? A very far cry from the days when long-running shows like The Onedin Line and Secret Army were the backbone of the channel, and the foundation on which its enormous viewer-loyalty was built.

Lastly, a nod to the Ian Scoones interview. Mr. Scoones is one of those people who, no matter how often he is interviewed, always seems to find something fresh and interesting to say - and the photos were intriguing.

Just one complaint, really. Hands off **The Flash,** Tom Baron! I've seen three episodes and it's brilliant - like the Batman movie meets Max Headroom! The Mark Hamill episode, The Trickster, in particular is classic telefantasy.

Ian Wheeler, Cumbria (29-8-91)

Just what is happening at Television Centre? Independent companies are falling over themselves to produce **Doctor Who.** Jon Pertwee, Sylvester McCoy and even Tom Baker have expressed a willingness to play the title rôle, but nothing is happening. The show has a future - even Michael Grade says so! And yet the BBC insists on maintaining their 'We're not going to produce it and we're not going to let anybody else touch it either' attitude . They obviously don't want others to succeed where they have failed.

But onto other things, and DWB#93 was excellent and I add my voice to those who hope to see the magazine continue beyond the 100th issue. No other publication offers both a forum for opinions (whatever they may be) and a superb news service to quite the same extent. My only complaint is that, like David Houlgate, I think that you should take a break from the photo-novels for the time being.

I was pleased to see the pilot episode on BBC2 as part of the Lime Grove tribute. Perhaps this will prompt further repeats (unlikely, I know). Interestingly, with the BSB repeats last year and the pilot this, **Doctor Who** continues to have been on British tv screens every year since 1963.

As a final comment, I look forward to Reeltime's new release - Who the Hell is Sylvester McCoy When He's at Home?, in which the actor is interviewed by two carrots and an armadillo. Great stuff!

Michael Healy, Merseyside (2-9-91)

Congratulations on probably the best issue of the year. The articles and features were well written, informative and enjoyable to read.

I found the Marina Sirtis article to be trivial in the extreme and of little interest. Troi is my least favourite STTNG character and I find her performance toe-curling. I half-expect to see Troi handing out leaflets for one-parent families to claim welfare and setting up encounter groups for divorced and separated crew members. I don't know why the producers don't phase her out and continue with Guinan - a character who performs the same rôle and is more palatable.

The BBC Video forum was interesting, but I feel that it would be a mistake to release all the classic **Doctor Who** stories first. I feel that the tactic of releasing a classic with a not-so-classic or even a turkey works better (e.g. **The Seeds of Doom** with **The Horns of Nimon**). After a few years, after all the classics have been released, what will be left? That's right, the turkeys. After a few successive turkey releases the **Doctor Who** range would die a death.

The news about the Dan Dare series is not really a new project. Around 1980-81 ATV were set to produce a Dan Dare series with Edward Fox as the lead. They planned to use CSO for backgrounds (**Underworld**-style), though whether Digby and Professor Peabody were to be portrayed by actors or animation is a mystery as the rôles were never cast. Anyway, the project was shelved when ATV closed down and was taken over by Central.

Phillip Tricker, Suffolk (30-8-91)

As a fan of the Dan Dare comic strip, I am delighted and somewhat apprehensive about its proposed transfer to the cathode ray tube (television).

According to the article in DWB#93, a chap named Charles Denton was involved in the original strip. This is untrue. The force behind the original Dan Dare was Frank Hampson, who conceived, wrote, designed and drew (with the help of a studio team) the strip. Without Frank Hampson Dan Dare and, probably, The Eagle, would not exist.

Charles Denton? Never heard of him!

John Thippleton, West Yorkshire (10-9-91)

Congratulations for a splendid DWB#93. I especially enjoyed Tim Munro's article on BBC Video's selection policy. I did notice a couple of errors in the Deborah Watling interview: Conrad Phillips played William Tell, not Philip Conrad, and surely Pauline Collins played Samantha (not Sarah) Briggs.

Moving on to Richard Molesworth's interesting article on telefantasy in the archives, and particularly **Timeslip,** he says that all the episodes were transmitted in colour. This contradicts Timescreen issue 8 which lists episodes 16, 22 and 23 as being filmed in black and white because of a technician's strike, as well as Spencer Banks and Cheryl Burfield who have said that the series lost any chance of an American sale because of the several black and white episodes. I cannot comment on the 1970 transmission (we only had a black and white tv then), but during the 1973/74 repeat I distinctly recall episodes of **The Year of the Burn-Up** being shown in b&w. As Richard says, "A weird one, this".

Anthony Brown, Essex (25-9-91)

A couple of omissions from my **Star Cops** article in DWB#93 may have confused readers. Anybody still searching for the missing footnotes might like to know that they acknowledge that there is some dispute over production dates and methods for the series. Timescreen and TV Zone have, respectively, stated that production began in September '86, and that only the last episode was recorded individually. Also, while Richard Fitzgerald (DWB#92) would probably agree that **A Double Life** "need not have taken place at all", what I actually meant to say was that it "need not have taken place **in space** at all"!

Thoughts on Tim Munro's video piece. I rather suspect that JNT is already selecting their releases - look at next year's schedule - though it could just be that BBC Video are over-reacting to our requests that they put out a Davison. Whoever did select them obviously hasn't a clue, or else they'd've included **The Keeper of Traken** along with **Logopolis** and **Castrovalva** - they're a trilogy, for heaven's sake! The threat of **Underworld** on video does suggest one reason for continuing the Era tapes into colour - we could then get gems like **Underworld** 1 without having to suffer the rest of the story! (Did anyone else see JNT's claim that he included **The Space Pirates** so as to get a good selection of companions on video? Funny that. I thought there were lots of Zoe episodes out already. Had he included **The Underwater Menace,** that claim might have held water).

Finally, no way is STTNG: **Redemption** disappointing. It may not be as flashy as **The Best of Both Worlds** (although it's got some excellent space battles), but watching it is rather like being caught in a vice - you and Picard can see each turn for the worse coming, but can't think of anything to do to stop it...

John Hudson, Tyne and Wear (19-9-91)

I can't think what Alan Barnes is on about (DWB#93 letters). As far as I can see, he's advocating censorship and calling it editing. I don't see anything "sick" about Michael Healy's complaint of being "aurally raped" - it's quite an apt metaphor for some of the rubbish Keff McCulloch has put our way. If readers/viewers have strong opinions, why should you tone them down? Radio Times certainly isn't going to print these kind of comments, which is all the more reason why you should. If people in high places in the BBC happen to read DWB, then maybe their complacency will get a little bit dented, and then you'll have done some good. Alan Barnes claims to be offended by our comments: some of us are offended by the BBC's apathy at falling standards and its disregard of the fantasy genre. DWB is a valuable outlet for criticism - please **don't** water down readers' comments.

I see that BBC Enterprises has now released I, Claudius at around £20 for double tape packs, each with a running time of over 300 minutes! This shows even more clearly what rip-offs the double **Doctor Who** tapes are. With **The Web Planet** and **The Dalek Invasion of Earth** we get half of this running time for the same price, and they can't possibly expect us to believe that the video rights for these stories cost them as much as I, Claudius. It's obvious that even such a brilliant series as this simply wouldn't sell at the prices they're asking for **Doctor Who,** so we're mad if we buy the double packs. I am a dedicated fan of the 'real' **Doctor Whos,** but refuse to be conned. There are now signs that BBC Enterprises are beginning to relent - putting **Genesis** and **Sontaran Experiment** together to give better value for money. I feel we should all boycott the £20+ single-story tapes until they really get the message.

Star Trek - The Next Generation gets better every week. The Borg, introduced in the episode **Q who?,** were a brilliant creation, and the humour and imagination seem to grow with each episode. But why is the BBC still showing it with a mono soundtrack when it was made in stereo? Presumably it's just another manifestation of the low esteem in which science fiction and fantasy are held that no-one has taken the trouble to check that they were receiving stereo tapes.

ED: In a frank interview with BBC Video next issue, they come clean over the policy of the double-tape releases.

Alan Dobbie, London N22 (4-9-91)

What can I say? Without doubt DWB#93 has got to be one of the best that I've seen in ages. The front cover was very striking and has got me well in the mood for **Genesis of the Daleks** on video. I was delighted to read the letters page - it must be one of the few magazines where the readers' complaints about the magazine that they are writing to are actually printed. DWAS take note! And I adored the interview with Deborah Watling and I was only sorry it wasn't longer.

Martin Jackson, Surrey (3-9-91)

I was most interested in the double review of **Genesis of the Daleks,** and particularly Peter Linford's list of criticisms, which I think were on the whole unfounded. First of all, the thousand year war. Well, why not? A continual cycle of advancement and setbacks could last indefinitely with two evenly-matched sides. I'm sure that the >

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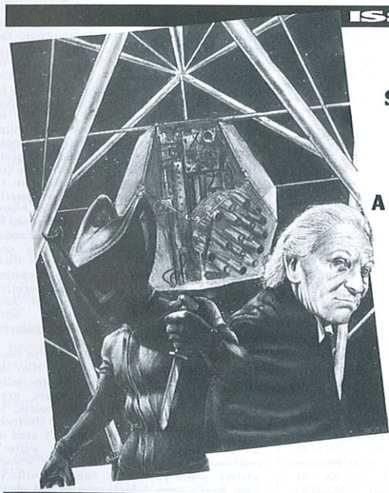
ISSUE 44



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idea of the rocket occurred to the Thals much earlier, but it was not put into practice because it was a tremendous gamble using up all of their resources, and if it failed they would be defenceless.

As for the Kaleds deciding to mutate into Daleks, I doubt if they had much choice in the matter as they didn't have the same anti-radiation drugs as developed by the Thals. As to how they reproduce - they don't, which is why Davros was experimenting with the creation of new Daleks in **Revelation**. The mutants created by Davros became the initial Daleks, and each mutated Kaled would be added to the numbers until all the Kaleds had become Daleks. This presumably would take some time unless the Daleks found some way of speeding things up, and of course they have total control over the remaining Kaleds now. Initially the Daleks'/Kaleds' aim was to become supreme on Skaro, but only when Davros learn of other worlds from the Doctor do they begin to contemplate universal supremacy.

Genesis of the Daleks was a true classic of **Doctor Who**, and few have matched it since.

Ade Mactow, London N17 (1-9-91)

With the forthcoming release of **Genesis** there is much excitement amongst fans about the prospect of having Davros' first appearance available on video.

What many seem to have missed or (more likely) are unaware of is the fact that Davros **isn't** the 'inventor' of the Daleks, contrary to popular received 'wisdom'. According to my 'Dalek Pocket-book and Space Travellers Guide' published in 1965, the two Kaled scientists Yevelling and Zolfian first encountered one of the new race following the mutation on Skaro. They were then instrumental in further developing the Dalek race as we all now know it.

Although this is one of the many inconsistencies / contradictions that have cropped up in **Doctor Who** over the past 28 years, this one has always been a rather large bone of contention as far as I'm concerned. Incidentally, the Pocketbook was written by Terry Nation - a man who presumably knows what he's talking about!

Steve Eramo, MA, USA (8-9-91)

I agree with Duncan Harvey (DWB#93) that the Davison era of the programme seems to have been very underrated. Davison, my favourite incarnation of the Doctor, did an excellent job in the rôle; he definitely brought a vulnerability and, in some cases, more of a believability to the character in which viewers could more identify with. I certainly enjoyed Tom Baker in the part, but I feel Peter Davison's work on the programme should be allowed to stand on its own and be considered the important contribution to the history of **Doctor Who** that it is.

Craig Gray, Glasgow (2-9-91)

I commend you for being honest enough to print letters like mine criticising an aspect of your magazine (DWB#93 letters). Yet again DWB is willing to hear all sides and not just print letters praising it. I would like to point out that my complaint was against the poll only and not a defence of apathy. I confess to not having written to the BBC about **Doctor Who** simply because I have my doubts it would do any good. As the letter you printed from David Maclean M.P. pointed out, the BBC are very much a law unto themselves.

Now onto the excellent issue itself. As if to prove the final point of my last letter, there were the articles by Paul Gadzikowski and Peter Linford & Nick Pegg. Are there any plans to extend the 'defend-a-turkey' or 'defend-a-classic' slot to **Star Trek, Blake's 7, STTNG**, etc.? Anybody out there wanna tell us why they think **Spock's Brain** is actually a classic piece of **Trek**?

I found Tim Munro's article on video selection very interesting. Non-fan perception of the **Who** video range is indeed crucial to its survival. I also found myself agreeing wholeheartedly with the **Timewyrm: Exodus** review. This is excellent and full marks to Peter Darvill-Evans and Terrance Dicks. I enjoyed **Genesys** but felt that the (seemingly) constant references to past adventures were tedious in the extreme. **Exodus** blended the past into its story perfectly. A vast improvement.

I must also disagree with David Fox's letter in regard to Ace in **Exodus**. Although not quite as perfect as her portrayal in Peel's book, I felt Terrance Dicks did well. I hardly think that one scream and two faints is enough to claim Dicks turned her into a "screamer". Remember, Ace wakes up in what looks like a scene from a "horror movie" only to discover it's real. To scream and then faint only underlines how terrible it must be - if it makes Ace scream it must be bad! Also, recall her embarrassment and anger at herself for reacting this way (page 184). I don't recall Jo Grant, Peri Brown or Sarah Jane Smith - the Scream Queen herself - ever being repentant about their screams. If Ace was allowed to go on being completely unafraid of everything she ever encountered she would become unrealistic (even Indiana Jones was afraid of snakes!). Recall also that she screams an apology to her mother in front of the firing squad in **The Curse of Fenric**, but I don't think that makes her a screamer either.

Keith Topping, Newcastle Upon Tyne (29-8-91)

I was very interested by David Fox's letter regarding the sexual content of **Timewyrm: Genesys** and sexism in general.

It's not without a certain irony that **Doctor Who** is still held in certain quarters as one of the last bastions of pre-feminism since, in effect, **Doctor Who** has always been the product of middle class, middle-aged males (except Verity Lambert who wasn't one, but was surrounded by them!). If we're going to talk objectively about the development of the treatment of women within telefantasy in general (and **Doctor Who** in particular) since the mid 1960s, the first point that should be made is that the image of the standard female characters is usually set within the social context of their surroundings - thus, '60s **Doctor who** girls were little more than teenage rôle models for girls and harmless pre-pubescent schoolgirl fantasies with stereotyped 'Tom Boy' realism tacked on.

In essence, the point at which **Doctor Who**'s perception of women changed was with the realisation that the audience to which they were aiming had changed (in both age group and viewing reasons) - let's face it, everybody who watched the programme in the mid-late '70s has got stories about their dads drooling over their beans on toast as Leela or Sarah Jane heaved themselves into view (I could get really controversial and talk about the extremely **fetishist** idea of "females in peril" generally, but that's the province of an article really!).

Doctor Who has never, despite claims to the contrary by producers and fans alike, been able to wholly preserve women as equals. Sometimes this uncomfortability with the form veers into outright paranoia and you get a piece of blatant groin thrusting, such as **Vengeance on Varos** (on tv) or **Genesys** (in novels), which seem to misogynistically sneer at the outside world and treat their women like pieces of meat.

I'm interested that David Fox chooses to defend **Genesys** on the grounds that **Exodus** reverts to traditional sexual mores and thus allows the women to be "put in their place". I think he's mistaken in assuming that sexual frankness is akin to liberation and even more so in thinking that John Peel's rather limited ability with euphamisms makes **Genesys** the classic he clearly believes it to be.

As someone who hopes, one day, to have material published for a living, I'm as aware as anyone that good porn sells. There's nothing wrong with open, even lurid descriptions of sexual intercourse, so long as a) it's well written, b) it furthers the storyline, and c) it simply isn't used as a massive assertion of the writer's maleness (where are all the erotic women writers when you really need them?!). In John Peel's case, I feel, none of the above are even close to being satisfied.

If **Genesys** works at all, on any level, it is as a fetishist hymn for all of those little boys out there who have always wanted to write a **Doctor Who** story featuring copulation, but never had either the platform or the nerve. Just because Peel has both, doesn't mean he's right to flaunt his prejudices quite so openly. Then again, Philip Hinchcliffe did it often enough...

John Pettigrew, Fife (19-9-91)

I for one think that The New Adventures series from Virgin is shaping up nicely and is probably the most constructive venture to occur outside the BBC since the airing of **Survival 3**. John Peel's **Genesys** is no way as bad as some people have made out - beneath the surface it's a very traditional story, and Terrance Dicks' **Exodus** is without doubt the best **Who**-related piece in his canon. If the next two books in the sequence are as good and the **Cat's Cradle** material is on a par, then McCoy's incarnation has a rosy future.

These novels **have** to be good to sell - the opportunity is there for intricate stories to be laid out the right way and not crammed together like the three episodes of **Ghost Light**. Also it is worth noting that JNT is no longer the producer of new **Who** material. If you like Peter Darvill-Evans is the new incumbent - the first new producer of **Who** material for over ten years, he may even make a good script-editor for any proposed new series...

MISSING EPISODES -
OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENTS ?

Graham Howard, New Zealand

The possibility of there still being missing **Doctor Who** episodes in New Zealand was first raised to me by John McElroy in 1980, then of the DWAS Overseas Department (when overseas members were not treated like shit as they have been in the last few years), who suggested I send a letter off to TVNZ asking them for any information they may have. Although I eventually received a negative response I was not totally convinced and continued to make periodic enquiries over the years. To cut a long story short, some months ago - after much persuasion - I was finally allowed to sift through the large stocks of old overseas programmes that TVNZ has been accumulating, mainly black and white programmes dating from the 1960s and up until the early 1970s. Although I knew that TVNZ had already looked for missing episodes of a number of programmes, including **Doctor Who**, because of the large quantity of cans stored there (hundreds) I thought there was still a slim chance that they may have missed something. When I pulled out a film can with "Assassin at

Peking" on it, and then shortly afterwards "The Moonbase - Episode Three" I thought I must have been right. But, of course, the contents didn't match the labels (dammit!). Ironically the film inside 'Assassin' was wanted by TVNZ for their own archives.

According to the people I spoke to about it the episodes were almost certainly destroyed - the film cans had simply been re-used. Other small possibilities were that the films had been misfiled, "borrowed" or sent to Australia. It seems that we will probably never know as it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to trace them now, and what is more TVNZ is simply not interested. The best way to find out for sure would be to find TVNZ's card catalogue entries for the two episodes which would have been filled out on their entry into the country. The programme traffic system was computerised some years ago and I am told that the records for the previous card system are down in TVNZ's basement. My contact says that finding these particular records would be a very time-consuming business, and they may not even be there. There is also a slim chance that the episode/s could have been put in the wrong film cans, but actually opening up each can held at TVNZ would be a massive job, and it would be better to have a more tangible lead - - such as conclusive evidence from programme traffic records - before suggesting this to TVNZ.

I'll be very interested in hearing of any general fan reaction from the UK fan scene.

Bob Tutnell, Vancouver, Canada (20-9-91)

I have been investigating into the history of **Doctor Who** here in Canada and have been trying to locate any episodes of the show (missing episodes in particular), and I have discovered some very interesting information regarding the airing of the series on CBC-TV during the 1960s.

Of note is that they showed from **An Unearthly Child** and only up to **The Keys of Marinus** and the CBC **did** show **Marco Polo**! I spoke to their archives and we looked for that particular story but found nothing. I was told that it was very likely that they may have old episodes of the show but during one of the local clean-ups may have burned the episodes or sent them back to CBC Toronto's Head Office. In which case, I was told, it is very likely that CBC still has those tapes!! If the CBC have any **Doctor Who**, it could amount to more than just one story because when I lived in Edmonton - before moving to Vancouver - years ago I distinctly remember seeing **The Celestial Toymaker, The Evil of the Daleks** and **The Wheel in Space**! The CBC told me that although **Doctor Who** was a network series, each affiliate would show it on local schedules when they wanted. CBC received master tapes from the BBC and then made telecine copies to be distributed to each affiliate to be shown. They were then either kept locally or sent back to Toronto, the latter being the more likely.

In conclusion I think I may have found lost **Doctor Who** episodes, and if the BBC contacted CBC about this they would probably take more notice from them than from some fan...

ED: While the prospect of anything materialising from either of the above is slim, DWB has nonetheless forwarded the letters on to the BBC Archival Unit...

Craig J. Neumann, Chicago, USA (3-9-91)

Personally, I don't think the end of **Doctor Who** on WTTV in Chicago (ref:DWB#94) was due to lack of interest on the fans' part, nor was it a lack of new episodes - especially considering the fact that we never saw Season 26. I think that the station has just decided to save cash by showing nothing but cheap programmes. It looks as though we in Chicago won't see the show even if it were put back into production. However, all hope is not lost: if fans in Chicago make a big enough stink it might make a reappearance. Then again, there's always the chance that the Sci-Fi Channel will make its presence known and we can still have **Doctor Who** via that route.

Neil Leedet, NC, USA (20-8-91)

Another tv station here has stopped broadcasting **Doctor Who**: North Carolina Public TV, near Raleigh, NC, has carried the show for ten years and announced, on July 27th, that it would no longer continue to do so. The reasons stated included the increasing cost of buying the show (thank you, Lionheart), no new episodes, and declining numbers of viewers (what do they expect when they have only shown Davison and McCoy episodes this year?). Protests are currently being made to the station.

A (TYPICAL ?) JNT FAN

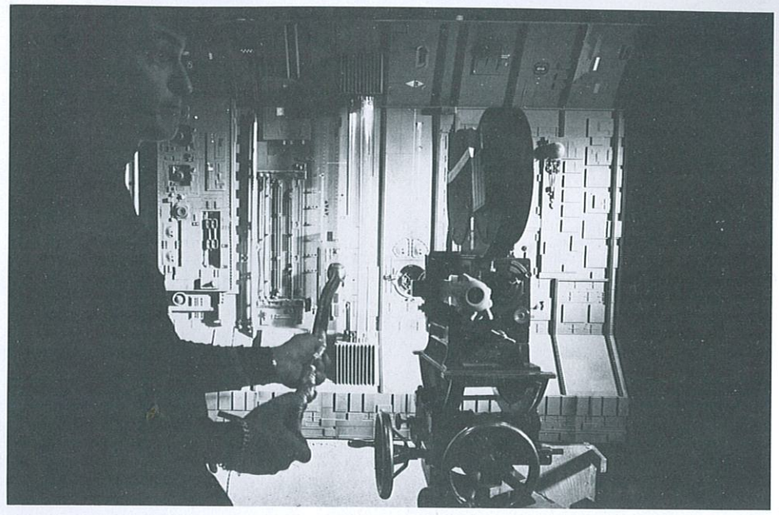
Michael Saunders, Reading (1-9-91)

Following recent issues of DWB I feel I must write to correct a couple of facts:
1) DWAS is **not** crap (Alan Barnes, DWB#93 letters). I have been a member for 12 years and it has improved continuously during this period, except for a few years in the mid-late '80s. It is less than half of the price of DWB - which is easily recouped through discount video and book offers. DWAS organises the best conventions, again with reductions for members, and PanoptiCon has by far and away the best and most varied collection of guests, with lively and informative panels. CT nowadays always arrives on time and is mainly concerned with **Doctor Who**. It may be shorter than DWB, but it's not padded with **Star Trek, Blake's 7** and the greatest turkey of all time, **STTNG**.
2) Nearly every letter seems to criticise John Nathan-Turner, so here's the case for the defence. Everyone says how wonderful the Hinchcliffe era was. If, however, he had the pathetic scripts - with notable exceptions like **Delta and the Bannermen** and **The Curse of Fenric** - and the restrictions Michael Grade put on JNT, people would be calling for his (Hinchcliffe's) head as well. JNT did an excellent job with bad scripts to produce an entertaining programme for the eleven years he was producer. Also worthy of note is that JNT produced **Logopolis**, which was voted the top story of all time in the DWAS Silver Anniversary Poll (1988).

Onto the era tapes. With the exception of **The Space Pirates** episode, the choice JNT made was inspired and could not have been better. They showed the flexability of **Doctor Who** and were a good cross-section. In my opinion the criticism against John Nathan-Turner is **totally** unjustified. To sum up, all I can say about JNT is "Sir, I salute you".

IAN SCOONES

IN THE FINAL INSTALMENT OF OUR INDEPTH INTERVIEW, VISUAL EFFECTS EXPERT IAN SCOONES CONTINUES DISCUSSING HIS WORK ON SEASON ONE OF 'BLAKE'S 7' AND BRINGS US RIGHT UP TO DATE. LAST ISSUE WE ENDED WITH IAN'S DESIGN SKETCH FOR THE CATHEDRAL IN 'CYGNUS ALPHA' AND THE FINISHED RESULT...



IAN SCOONES: The directive in the script was that it was the exterior of an architecturally strange edifice at dawn with mist, which was just as well because (see DWB#94, bottom of page 20) it is crude without smoke (centre) and looks modelly. And who made that, would you believe, but Brian Johnston who happened to be in the bar at Bray at the time and he said "Oh, I'll make that out of plastacine", and he did it in about ten minutes. When we shot it with the dry ice we missed a frame every other frame to speed it up which gave an even more realistic misty effect.

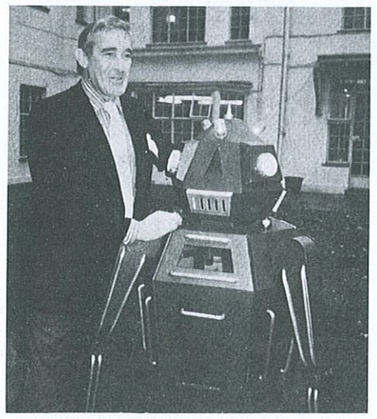
Why were you appointed as the visual effects designer for the entire season?

It was half my fault that I got lumbered in the sense that with the high level of competitiveness - which, don't get me wrong, was very healthy on the floor - I didn't want anyone else in on it, as simple as that, so I stayed the course. After I left two VFX designers were appointed; Jim Francis and Steve Drewett.

But surely you weren't to know that 'Blake's 7' would be such a success?

No, but I knew that if we made it the right way we could have an English **Star Trek** on our hands. That was what we were hoping for and, to an extent, we did. We got a huge following and a lot of bad criticism too, but you can't please everybody all of the time.

Did you design the Federation Patrol Robot that first appeared in 'Time Squad' as well as all of the publicity shots with Terry Nation (below)?



Yes, that was Terry Nation having his eye on them taking off as "the new Daleks", and I said "Don't you want the designer in this shot?", and he said "No, no, this is a shot of **me**!" Everybody's out for their own egos in this business.

In a roundabout way that reminds me of the reason why Gareth Thomas left the series. After the second series he went to do some stuff at the Royal Shakespeare Company, from where he came originally, and he said "They can't do another series until I've finished my season here, and anyway they're going to have to pay me double!" Rather than postpone the season, the BBC weren't going to wait for him, and they certainly weren't going to pay him double, so they just wrote him out. He said "What do you mean? I **am Blake's 7**! You can't make it without me!"

The official reason given was that he left because he was afraid of getting typecast and he wanted to do other things.

Bullshit! He was certainly happy with getting all the publicity and everything and he could have become a well known star, but instead Paul Darrow walked away with it. He was a much more interesting character anyway!

Were resources in the VFX department stretched with 'Doctor Who' in production at the same time?

We had plenty of people in the department and we were always bringing in extras, and when you couldn't do it inhouse you'd do it outside, so no. However there weren't any people available to make the models on **Blake's 7** and so we brought in Space Models to do them. Mat Irvine was also on loan to me for a short time on certain things. If there was ever any rivalry between the two series it was always in a fun way.

Did you have any regrets about any of the effects work on 'Blake's 7'?

One of the biggest problems I found was where we had things suspended on wires. In the gallery if they saw something that was a bit low-key they'd 'tweak' it up. Now, the original negative of the film would be transferred to video, and if it wasn't 'tweaked' down you'd see a whole multitude of sins. I used to have to spend most of my time up in the box, not down on the floor when we were recording, to make sure that the bloody engineers weren't tweaking things up! The only one I ever met who understood was Mitch Mitchell, but these other technical blokes were going by the book and watching their graphs. They don't care if half a dozen wires are glistening and that if they were turned down they'd still glisten but look like stars.

You were still making the first series when it started airing and you were virtually chasing your tails towards the end.

In a way that helped because it was an instantaneous success which enabled us to dare to go for more money towards the end of that season.

Who actually created Orac?

It wasn't Roger Murray Leach! Steve Drewett made it.

How long were you at the BBC in all?

Eleven years altogether, up until about 1980. I left **Blake's 7** and was about to do some wonderful shows like **The Triffids** when the BBC started having cutbacks. I actually designed the Triffids but it was put back eighteen months until after I'd left the BBC and Steve Drewett came in with his own ideas. It was one where I'd really gone into finite detail and I thought 'This is going to be my big one' because I loved the story. I did a complete breakdown for everything that was going to be needed for the locations, for the shooting at Ealing, for the video at TV Centre, and it all got cancelled. I thought that the finished product was a good little show and it kept very much to the original story.

Were there any people in the business that you wanted to emulate in your work?

Les Bowie (ref:DWB#92) is my hero. I can't say my contemporaries such as Nicky Alder and Brian Johnston. They might have done very nicely thank you, but I wouldn't like to be like them in any way at all.

Poor old Les Bowie died after winning the Oscar on Superman, but sadly he never knew about it. He always wanted to work on a big picture - he'd been so pissed off working on cheap budget films - and he was on Superman for about four years, so much so that the tax man said 'You're not freelance anymore, you're permanently employed by the production company', but they got around that one somehow.

Les contracted cancer, which his wife thinks he contracted from playing around with cycophlexamine and acetic acid which, when combined, produce a terribly toxic smoke. This was for the Olivier Dracula film directed by Frank Migella, and his idea was to phantomize instant shapes of smoke in a coffin. He was coughing very badly and when they opened him up he had cancer and he died soon afterwards. Superman had just come out and Les died on the very night that it was announced that he was among the five or six people involved on the film who won an Oscar, but he never knew. His wife Eileen has got it at home and she always says, knowing Les the way he was, that on that night he was looking through the clouds and smiling a very broad grin.

What prompted you to leave the BBC? >

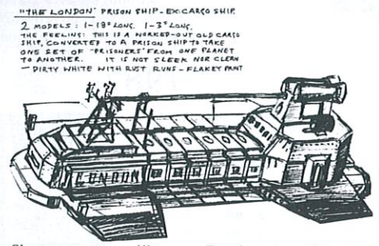
As I said I was going through a bad patch at the Beeb, which was purely frustration because work was not coming the way I wanted it to. I was perfectly secure but I didn't need to be secure - I didn't want a bloody pension, I'm not that type of guy. Out of the blue Hammer decided to make a television series of thirteen films and I suddenly got a phone call from Ron Skeggs, the new owner, and who had been the producer on quite a few dreadful pictures like On The Buses. He said 'Poor old Les is dead, I need an effects man, are you married to the BBC?' and I said 'No' and he said 'Well, I'm interested in employing you for The Hammer House of Horror series which is going to take off', which it never really did actually. So I left the BBC and was the visual effects supervisor for the whole series. Charlie Boy was good I thought, and I liked The Scream with dear Peter Cushing where he played the ex-Nazi who trapped all the animals. The House That Dripped Blood was another favourite, and that was done with a gravity feed in the attic with a tube coming down and, on cue, spurting all this red liquid all over the kids.

It's a shame they didn't do any in the more traditional gothic style.

That was due to money again - you'd have to start building sets specially. Everyone fights shy of the idea of science fiction and fantasy nowadays because it spells money out of the run of the mill. All the time they can get away with showing actors-only programmes like soap operas which get the ratings and where advertisers can make their money because they know they've got a guaranteed audience - they don't want to get into complicated, higher ethereal things which cost more and people don't watch in comparison, at least not in their mass millions.

What have you been doing recently.

Earlier this year I was involved in a small way with IT (Inside Time), which is a sort of a poor man's **Doctor Who** for Thames, just doing a few bangs here and there. I did the Barclaycard ad this year featuring Rowan Atkinson with the exploding pen. It was a very good earner because we got paid double as from 11 o'clock until 1 o'clock and then it goes treble and we were still doing it at 4 o'clock in the morning and we'd been there from 7pm! It was the night of the Gulf War breaking out and the art director had filled the whole of the H-stage - the biggest one at


"THE LONDON" PRISON SHIP - EX-CARGO SHIP
2 MODELS: 1-18" LONG. 1-3" LONG.
THE FEELING: THIS IS A HACKED-OUT OLD CARGO SHIP, CONVERTED TO A PRISON SHIP-TO TAKE ONE SET OF "PRISONERS" FROM ONE PLANET TO ANOTHER. IT IS NOT SLEEK. NOR CLEAN
- DIRTY WHITE WITH RUST RUNS - FLAKEY PAINT
LONDON

Shepperton - like a Bond set with two inches of water on black polythene where the submarine should have been but they couldn't afford it. They brought in forty American and British rockets, missiles, you name it, to make it really sort of military, but what with war breaking out they thought 'No, this is not good', so everything was covered up with tarpaulins much to the chagrin of the art director and the accountant!

At the moment of course I'm designing the layout for the forthcoming Hammer exhibition at the M O M I which will take over from **Doctor Who** in the New Year. I've been allocated seventy feet by thirty feet of floor space in which to house it.

Can we leave the last word to you Ian?

The effects man worth his salt will never say no because there's many ways of doing the same effect. The same as a magician knows how to do a card trick, each magician will do it slightly differently. There are ways and there are ways. The trouble is, you always get remembered for the bad things, for the thing that didn't fire at the time it was supposed to, not the positive, wonderful things.

Ian Scoones, thank you very much indeed.

GUIDE TO PHOTOGRAPHS

PAGE 7: (Left) Terry Nation takes the credit for Ian's new creation, the Federation Patrol Robot, (Top) Lining up a camera shot on one of Ian's more intricate model sets.

PAGE 8: A truly unique and rare shot of the Rill from the 1965 'Who story 'Galaxy Four', which was retrieved from storage together with a rocket from 'The Ambassadors of Death' for this 1970 group shot of the then visual effects team. Ian is slap bang in the centre, and if anyone would like to have a go at identifying all the other team members, then we'd be delighted to hear from you!

PAGE 9: Ian prepares his spaceship model, the London, for take off, alongside his original brief and design.

APOCALYPSE

THE UNIVERSE IS DYING... The Charged Vacuum Emboitment opened by the Doctor and the Master at the climax to the fourth Doctor's long and varied career has finally blinked and closed, and within ten billion years the onslaught of entropy will have rotted its way through existence...

The Doctor and Ace have tracked the Timewyrm to the lush paradise of the planet Kirith, once visited by the newly regenerated second Doctor. Saving the life of one of the natives, a young man named Raphael, the two companions are forced to become involved in the affairs of the Kirithons and their ruling body, the unseen Panjistri, providers for the Kirithons' every need. Ace is not impressed by the apparent perfection of the planet, including the locals, referring to them as "third-rate Aussie soap stars...". Very soon all is not what it seems, and the Doctor finds himself asking too many questions. Who are the Panjistri and the enigmatic Brotherhood of Kandasi, a group to which many Kirithons aspire to join? What horrors lie beyond the Darkfell where all are forbidden to tread, and what is the significance of the telepathic message from the Doctor's second incarnation?

And what of the Timewyrm? Is she responsible for the inconsistencies in the history of Kirith, or is her purpose of a more daunting and horrific nature?

I must admit to not being the greatest fan of the Timewyrm concept. I bought 'Genesys', but the novel failed to inspire and I never finished it, which probably put me off buying 'Exodux'. So when I came to 'Apocalypse', I opened the book not quite knowing what to expect. I was pleasantly surprised.

From the point of view of somebody unfamiliar with the series' theme, the story is incredibly easy to get into, with the Timewyrm being explained away briefly but concisely in a couple of paragraphs. Neither does the author assume that the reader is new to the concept of 'Doctor Who', meaning that the first chapter isn't cluttered up with explanations of who exactly the Doctor is and why he's travelling around the Universe in a police box with a girl from Perivale - really not necessary when surely 99% of the readers have picked up countless Target novels in the past.

Nigel Robinson has delivered a story which shows a great understanding of the essence of 'Doctor Who' - both through subtle continuity references and a nicely handled cameo appearance by the second Doctor (although, very pleasing for the fans, they are not rammed down the reader's throat ala 'Genesys', and actually have some bearing on the plot), and through the characterisation of the Doctor and Ace.

I find McCoy's Doctor much more pleasing on the printed page than on screen, and Robinson brings him across superbly. There is that slight whimsical nature to the character, but the Time Lord is always in control even when he hasn't got a clue what's going on. Refreshingly, the Doctor does use force in some situations but always with regret, but for the most part his battle against the evil of the Panjistri is carried out on an intellectual level, as seen by this exchange between the Doctor and Lord Reptu:

"You regard us as evil, Doctor."

"I hate and despise anyone and anything that perverts the true cause of nature."

There was no more to be said, and the pair continued their journey in silence.

Ace is just as she was on screen - as colourful and brash as Sophie Aldred portrayed her but with added embellishments. Her dialogue is so much more realistic for a teenager of the late eighties, and she throws herself into the most dangerous situations, experiencing life in all its diversity and richness. It is these qualities which impress the young Kirithon, Raphael, who has never come across such rich emotions, the Kirithons being a calm, peaceloving race. So taken is Raphael with the human that he voices wishes of joining the TARDIS crew, not only to see the Universe but to be with Ace.

The arrival of the Doctor and Ace on Kirith sets a sequence of events into operation that totally changes the lives of the entire population. The Grand Matriarch, watching from her hidden lair, has been waiting for the Doctor and, more specifically, Ace for thousands of years, and the final stages of her plan can proceed towards the Omega Point. The Matriarch is a villainess in true 'Who tradition, apparently based on Sian Philips; at times a kindly old woman, at others a demonic witch with her retinue of 'companions' - a wonderfully vicious race of weasel-ish, dog-like humanoids who act as guards servants and hunters.

Miril, the kindly scholar whose dream is to travel beyond the confines of his planet, like so many Kirithons has his life turned upside down when the Doctor destroys his belief in the Panjistri. At first he refuses to believe the blasphemy of this stranger, but his respect for the Time Lord overrides his loyalty and belief until he sums up the anger to direct against the people who have cheated his fellows for hundreds of years.

The majority of the characters are all tragic in some way - from the genetically-altered mutants of the Darkfell to the duped Kirithons. Fetch, companion of the Grand Matriarch, is a repugnent, sulky creature who loves his mistress and is given nothing in return for his undying loyalty. Even the Matriarch herself is a bitter and twisted old woman who perhaps does not like what she has become in order to obtain her goal.

If you're looking for a good read in the true tradition of the programme but on a seemingly much grander scale, then 'Apocalypse' is for you. Genetic experimentation, political and religious backstabbing, a new race of worthy monsters, a plot which twists and turns but always remains clear, and a colourful cast of believable and well-drawn characters are all thrown into the melting pot to give a worthwhile book which restored my faith in what I considered to be - after the first novel - a dead end project. On the strength of 'Apocalypse' I may even be tempted to go back and give old Terrance and 'Exodus the chance it probably deserves...

MARK WRIGHT

A COLLECTOR'S GUIDE TO THE TARGET RANGE OF 'DOCTOR WHO' BOOKS: Part Two – 1986 to 1991

Concluding TY POWER's guide to the Target novelisations of the televised Doctor Who stories. Remember that all releases here relate to the paperback editions.

1986

Jan	*Doctor Who — The Gunfighters* — Donald Cotton	£1.60
Feb	*Doctor Who — The Time Monster* — Terrance Dicks	£1.60
Mar	*Doctor Who — The Twin Dilemma* — Eric Saward	£1.60
Apr	*Doctor Who — Galaxy Four* — William Emms	£1.60
May	*Doctor Who — Timelash* — Glen McCoy	£1.60
June	*Doctor Who — The Mark of the Rani* — Pip and Jane Baker	£1.60
July	*Doctor Who — The King's Demons* — Terence Dudley	£1.60
Sept	*Doctor Who — The Savages* — Ian Stuart Black	£1.60
Oct	*Doctor Who — Fury from the Deep* — Victor Pemberton	£1.95
Nov	*Doctor Who — The Celestial Toymaker* — Gerry Davis & Alison Bingeman	£1.60
Dec	*Doctor Who — The Seeds of Death* — Terrance Dicks	£1.60

General

Release number 106 was to have been *Vengeance on Varos*, but Philip Martin's manuscript was considerably delayed.

There was a definite movement towards getting older stories novelised, as WH Allen were pretty much up to date with the releases. Over half of this year's novelisations were stories from the first two Doctors. Another trend was the original scriptwriters' interest in novelising their own work. There was a resurgence in reader interest now that Terrance Dicks was no longer writing 90% of the books, and of course there was money to be made. Only the two Terrance Dicks titles of this year were not written by the original scriptwriter or someone closely connected with the relevant script.

Artwork

Five cover illustrations from Andrew Skilleter this year, but his original artwork for *The Twin Dilemma* featured a likeness of Colin Baker which was rejected by the actor. Skilleter was forced to paint another cover, this time leaving the sixth Doctor off.

David McAllister was commissioned to complete four cover illustrations, including *Fury from the Deep*.

The Celestial Toymaker cover, which Andrew Skilleter had been looking forward to working on, went instead to Graham Potts. This was his only contribution to the novelisation series.

Another name new to the televised novelisation artwork was Tony Masero. He worked on the final release of the year, *The Seeds of Death*, which was to win him more commissions.

Writers

Eric Saward had been unhappy with his first novelisation, *The Visitation*, and wanted to attempt another. Although *The Twin Dilemma* was originally scripted by Anthony Steven, it contained much of Saward's work in the rewriting and the last two episodes were entirely his. When writing the novel he decided to approach it with humour, as he considered that humour worked well with a thriller. It was also his intention to make it an expression of himself rather than a straight script conversion.

William Emms and Glen McCoy novelised their own scripts for *Galaxy Four* and *Timelash* respectively. These were their sole contributions to the series.

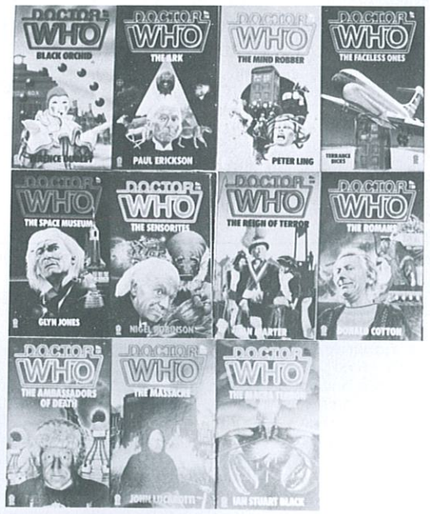
Terence Dudley worked as a playwright before moving into the realms of directing and producing for television. Two early successes with which he was involved were Doomwatch and Survivors. His first involvement with Doctor Who was when he directed the 1980 Tom Baker story *Meglos*. He then turned his hand back to writing, scripting three stories for Peter Davison's Doctor. The first of these was *Four to Doomsday* in 1982, the first Davison story to be recorded. His interest in history led to two other scripts, both two-parters : *Black Orchid* in 1982 and *The King's Demons* in 1983. The latter was the first of two he novelised himself, for which he received much praise.

Twenty years after the screening of his stories, Ian Stuart Black was approached by Target to novelise them. He was told that they could get somebody else to do them if he declined the opportunity himself. He accepted the challenge, horrified by the idea of someone else, however competent, working on them. It was literally a case of Black doing them or their not being done at all. The first was *The Savages*, released this year.

Victor Pemberton's novelisation of his *Fury from the Deep* script is generally considered to be one of the best of the range. Although restricted to a certain word count, he submitted a manuscript far in excess of that which was required. Target was so impressed with what it received that it decided not to edit it at all and the book was released in a smaller typeface but with a larger-than-average page count of 189.

Although Gerry Davis and Alison Bingeman share the credit for *The Celestial Toymaker* novelisation, it is virtually all the work of the latter, Davis' contribution being minimal editing.

1987



Jan	*Doctor Who — Black Orchid* — Terence Dudley	£1.75
Feb	*Doctor Who — The Ark* — Paul Erickson	£1.75
Mar	*Doctor Who — The Mind Robber* — Peter Ling	£1.75
Apr	*Doctor Who — The Faceless Ones* — Terrance Dicks	£1.75
June	*Doctor Who — The Space Museum* — Glyn Jones	£1.80
July	*Doctor Who — The Sensorites* — Nigel Robinson	£1.95
Aug	*Doctor Who — The Reign of Terror* — Ian Marter	£1.95
Sept	*Doctor Who — The Romans* — Donald Cotton	£1.95
Oct	*Doctor Who — The Ambassadors of Death* — Terrance Dicks	£1.95
Nov	*Doctor Who — The Massacre* — John Lucarotti	£1.95
Dec	*Doctor Who — The Macra Terror* — Ian Stuart Black	£1.95

General

Nigel Robinson relinquished his position as Doctor Who editor at WH Allen this year — initially to Sara Barnes and Tim Byrne — but Jo Thurm took over permanently during the same year.

With the publication of *The Ambassadors of Death*, the Jon Pertwee era was now fully novelised.

Artwork

Seven covers were produced by Tony Masero this year; the remaining four came from David McAllister.

Writers

Terence Dudley followed up the previous year's novelisation of *The King's Demons* with the equally engrossing *Black Orchid*.

Target editor Nigel Robinson had difficulty tracing Paul Erickson, original scriptwriter of *The Ark*, as neither the BBC nor fan factions seemed to know where he now lived. He was finally found through the simple use of a phone book!

Glyn Jones's script and subsequent novelisation of *The Space Museum*, like Paul Erickson's *The Ark*, were his sole contributions to Doctor Who.

Nigel Robinson tackled his first novelisation, *The Sensorites*.

With his eighth novelisation, *The Reign of Terror*, Ian Marter passed Malcolm Hulke's tally, making him the second most published writer of the book series after Terrance Dicks.

Donald Cotton followed the success of the novelisations of his own two scripts by turning his hand to Dennis Spooner's *The Romans*. An unusual addition to the range, it is written not as a straight narrative but in the form of letters and diary entries, but it did not prove as successful as *The Myth Makers* and *The Gunfighters*.

1988

Jan	*Doctor Who — The Rescue* — Ian Marter	£1.95
Feb	*Doctor Who — Terror of the Vervoids* — Pip and Jane Baker	£1.95
Mar	*Doctor Who — The Time Meddler* — Nigel Robinson	£1.99
Apr	*Doctor Who — The Mysterious Planet* — Terrance Dicks	£1.99
May	*Doctor Who — Vengeance on Varos* — Philip Martin	£1.99
June	*Doctor Who — The Wheel in Space* —Terrance Dicks	£1.99
July	*Doctor Who — The Underwater Menace* — Nigel Robinson	£1.99
Aug	*Doctor Who — The Ultimate Foe* — Pip and Jane Baker	£1.99
Sept	*Doctor Who — Time and the Rani* — Pip and Jane Baker	£1.99
Oct	*Doctor Who — The Edge of Destruction* — Nigel Robinson	£1.99
Nov	*Doctor Who — The Smugglers* — Terrance Dicks	£1.99
Dec	*Doctor Who — Paradise Towers* — Stephen Wyatt	£1.99

General

WH Allen renewed its five year contract with the BBC to exclusively release novelisations based on the tv stories.

This was the only year in which a televised Doctor Who story was novelised every month.

The Mysterious Planet, *Terror of the Vervoids* and *The Ultimate Foe* were subtitled *The Trial of a Time Lord* 1, 3 and 4 respectively, based upon episodes 1-4, 9-12 and 13-14 of that story. The titles for the first and last were the BBC working titles, but the Vervoid title was original, the episodes in question being, according the the BBC, the first four episodes of story 7C *'The Ultimate Foe'*.

The numbering system of the releases became rather confused. *The Mysterious Planet* was numbered 127 on the outside and 126 inside. *Time and the Rani* was numbered 127 inside and out, but was actually released number 128.

From *Time and the Rani* onwards the covers featured the new logo as seen on tv; *Vengeance on Varos* and *The Wheel in Space* were exceptions — publication was later than planned due to late delivery of manuscripts and the covers had already been printed with the old neon logo. Due to the computer-generated image, it was difficult to superimpose the new logo over the cover artwork, which meant that the logo was rather crudely bolted on top of the picture on a black background.

Artwork

Another major new artist emerged this year. Born on the Isle of Wight, Alister Pearson left school armed with grade A A-Level Art and a dream to combine his artistic talents with a long-term favourable subject — Doctor Who — and paint for the book covers. He answered an invitation from the then Target editor Christine Donougher in DWM for fans to send in artwork for a mystery project. This turned out to be Peter Haining's *Key to Time*. Pearson had two drawings published, both of which he now considers 'awful'. He also sent some artwork to Sheila Cranna at DWM, who contacted him many months later when he had practically given up hope, and he went on to do a well-received poster series.

It took him three years to achieve his dream. Several times he contacted Nigel Robinson, the new editor at WH Allen, and the art director, Mike Brett. He set himself projects and dispatched them, receiving no favourable responses. Pearson was told to invest in an airbrush, something that he didn't do as he disliked the over-smooth effect they produced. Among the paintings he sent were new illustrations for *Four to Doomsday* and *Image of the Fendahl* (which, characteristically, he now describes as 'absolute rubbish'). His first piece to see print for WH Allen was *The Underwater Menace*. Although the majority of his cover artwork has the black-box logo above, Pearson does not feel that it ruins his artwork. He is generally more concerned about how it is reproduced on the cover.

Pearson's original artwork for *The Ultimate Foe* depicted the Inquistor and the Valeyard in the courtroom scene. However, Lynda Bellingham and Michael Jayston withdrew their permission for their likenesses to be used and so a new painting was produced. His cover for *The Edge of Destruction* was the first to feature the TARDIS's control console. For *The Smugglers* Pearson could find no reference photos, so had to use history books from a library as reference.

Tony Clark contributed *The Rescue*, his first commission for the range, whilst *The Wheel in Space* was Ian Burgess's only contribution to the series. *The Time Meddler* was Jeff Cummins' first illustration for ten years and *The Mysterious Planet* and *Terror of the Vervoids* were the last contributions from Tony Masero. The seemingly jinxed David McAllister finally saw the finished product of his artwork for the considerably overdue *Vengeance on Varos* in paperback.

For *Time and the Rani* we returned briefly to a photographic cover. It was specially supplied by producer John Nathan-Turner, being an official publicity photo of Tetraps from an exhibition before the story was screened. There was a delay in the release of this title because the picture was originally reproduced upside down!

Writers

Sadly, *The Rescue* was Ian Marter's final novelisation, as he died shortly after its completion.

The remaining three Pip and Jane Baker novelisations — all converted from their own scripts — were released this year.

Three novelisations from Nigel Robinson as well, the latter two written after he had vacated the position of editor of WH Allen.

Philip Martin was a RADA trained actor before taking up writing. He has written for stage, radio and tv. His three Doctor Who stories were the televised *Vengeance on Varos* and *Mindwarp* (*Trial of a Time Lord* # 5-8) and *Mission to Magnus* from the original unscreened Season 23. *Vengeance on Varos* finally arrived in paperback this year, delayed since June 1986.

1989

Jan	*Doctor Who — Delta and the Bannermen* — Malcolm Kohll	£1.99
Feb	*Doctor Who — The War Machines* — Ian Stuart Black	£1.99
Mar	*Doctor Who — Dragonfire* — Ian Briggs	£1.99
Apr	*Doctor Who — Attack of the Cybermen* — Eric Saward	£1.99
June	*Doctor Who — Mindwarp* — Philip Martin	£1.99
July	*Doctor Who — The Chase* — John Peel	£1.99
Sept	*Doctor Who — The Daleks' Masterplan 1 : Mission to the Unknown* — John Peel	£1.99

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Oct *Doctor Who — The Daleks' Masterplan 2 : The Mutation of Time* — John Peel £1.99
Nov *Doctor Who — Silver Nemesis* — Kevin Clarke £1.99
Dec *Doctor Who — The Greatest Show in the Galaxy* — Stephen Wyatt £1.99

General

This is the first year since 1973 that Terrance Dicks had not a single novelisation published.

Jo Thurm left after more than two years as Doctor Who editor at WH Allen, to be replaced in February by Peter Darvill-Evans.

Dragonfire was released with the Doctor Who logo superimposed over the artwork rather than just stuck on a black background, but this was a one-off experiment and the old style soon resumed.

A few complaints this year surrounded the inconsistency in the packaging of *Mindwarp*. The first three books in the *Trial of a Time Lord* series to be released were all printed with the tubular logo and a corner slash, declaring them to be part of that series. *Mindwarp*, however, was minus the slash and featured the new logo. Additionally, the spines of the first three were blue whereas *Mindwarp*'s was white, following WH Allen's decision to give all future releases a white spine — a policy that was later abandoned. At the time WH Allen said that retailers would have been confused by the sudden reversion to the old logo.

The spine of *Delta and the Bannermen* was misspelt, so that the Doctor only had to deal with one Bannerman.

Because the number of stories left to novelise was rapidly diminishing, WH Allen considered beginning a range of original stories that would continue on from *Survival*. The news brought a flood of manuscripts from hopeful writers and prompted Peter Darvill-Evans to make a request that people not send in anything yet as WH Allen had only received permission in principle.

Artwork

Ten of the eleven releases this year featured the artwork of Alister Pearson.

The Chimeron egg and the satellite on the lower part of the *Delta and the Bannermen* cover form the ears of Mickey Mouse when the book is turned upside down — rather appropriate as the intended destination of the tour bus was Disneyland. Whether Pearson intended this is unknown. For *The War Machines*, Pearson enlisted the help of Graeme Wey, who used an airbrush to paint the perfect circles in the picture. Pearson is said to have based his revised *Dragonfire* illustration on the Jeff Cummins artwork for *The Face of Evil*, which he considered the best painting to adorn a novelisation.

WH Allen commissioned Colin Howard to paint the cover illustration for *Attack of the Cybermen*. Howard had drawn for many amateur fanzines over the years, including the DWAS's fiction zine Cosmic Masque, and like Pearson he had work featured in Peter Haining's *Key to Time*.

Writers

Two novelisations from Stephen Wyatt this year, both based on his scripts for *Paradise Towers* and *The Greatest Show in the Galaxy*. The latter was possibly the most disappointing release of the year, with no elaboration on a script that promised much more potential than it showed, and no explanations for the events in the tv version.

When Ian Briggs's manuscript for *Dragonfire* was delivered to WH Allen they cut the final line. Briggs disliked the effect this had on the book and so rewrote the last few sentences. Also, he was required to tone down the violence so that it was only hinted at.

John Peel, author of the three Dalek books released this year, expressed a wish to novelise the two Troughton Dalek stories. He was said to have had the backing of Terry Nation, and negotiations had supposedly begun with David Whitaker's estate. However, this was about as far as things reached. The delay at the time was put down to the exchange of editor at WH Allen. The novelisation of *The Chase* was based upon Terry Nation's original scripts rather than the televised version, and thus contained many changes, arguably improving the story considerably.

Both Malcolm Kohll and Kevin Clarke's books were their sole contribution to the series, and *The War Machines* was the last of Ian Stuart Black's original scripts to see print.

1990

Jan *Doctor Who — Planet of Giants* — Terrance Dicks £1.99
Feb *Doctor Who — The Happiness Patrol* — Graeme Curry £2.50
Mar *Doctor Who — The Space Pirates* — Terrance Dicks £2.50
June *Doctor Who — Remembrance of the Daleks* — Ben Aaronovitch £2.50
Aug *Doctor Who — Ghost Light* — Marc Platt £2.50
Sept *Doctor Who — Survival* — Rona Munro £2.50
Nov *Doctor Who — The Curse of Fenric* — Ian Briggs £2.50

General

Following persistent rumours that WH Allen had gone into liquidation, editor Peter Darvill-Evans issued a press release in which he said that there had been a major reorganisation; some imprints had been closed and staff made redundant. The company would continue to exist, more closely connected with its parent company Virgin Communications. The Target Doctor Who range would be unaffected.

In March we learnt that the future of the Doctor Who novelisations was rather precarious, with the knowledge that the list was up for sale to the highest bidder. *The Space Pirates* was released on schedule, beyond this there were disruptions. Peter Darvill-Evans assured us that whatever happened they would continue to release new titles, as well as reprint old ones, and hoped that he would be kept on as editor by whichever company bought the range.

In May it was announced that WH Allen would continue to release the novelisations, with only minor changes made to the schedule.

WH Allen sorted out its premise for a four book serial of New Adventures to follow on directly after *Survival*, featuring the seventh Doctor and Ace. The scenario was set out in a detailed letter sent to anybody interested in trying their hand. *[See DWB #80.]*

Planet of Giants completed the Hartnell era releases.

In January WH Allen art director Mike Brett left. He was not replaced.

Artwork

The previous year Alister Pearson had been contacted by Graeme Curry, at the request of the then editor Jo Thurm, to discuss the cover for *The Happiness Patrol*. Aware that Pearson might not be able to depict the Kandyman on the cover, due to the dispute over the matter between Bassetts and the BBC, Curry told him that in the novelisation the character was to be portrayed as it was in his original script rather than as it was on tv.

Writers

Planet of Giants and *The Space Pirates* were Terrance Dicks's final contributions to the televised range, having had new books published sixteen years out of eighteen.

Ben Aaronovitch's novelisation of his *Remembrance of the Daleks* script was released this year after considerable delay caused by his underestimation of the time it would take. The various flashbacks involving the creation of UNIT and the assembling of the Hand of Omega first had to be cleared with producer John Nathan-Turner.

Graeme Curry novelised his script for *The Happiness Patrol*, extending many scenes from the tv version.

Ian Brigg's manuscript for *The Curse of Fenric* was considerably delayed due to problems he had with the ending. Unsure of his intention regarding the underwater scene with Ace, he had to delve deeper into his story than he had to for the tv script. The finished book contained many historical flashback scenes as background to the main story, which weren't seen on tv.

Rona Munro was only the second woman to script a Doctor Who story on her own, and like Barbara Clegg she also novelised her own script, *Survival*, including new scenes and omitting others from the televised version.

1991

July *Doctor Who — Battlefield* — Marc Platt £2.50

General

We finally reach the end of the televised range of Doctor Who novelisations with *Battlefield*, which completed the McCoy stories. Six titles remain unwritten — the four Dalek stories and Douglas Adams' two — as well as the untelevised *Shada*, none of which are likely to gain clearance in the near future. As a result only Hartnell, Pertwee and McCoy are fully represented in print.

Virgin Publishing bought out the remainder of WH Allen.

Artwork

Alister Pearson had the singular honour of producing the final piece of original cover artwork for the televised range for the foreseeable future. In fact he had completed the illustration a number of monthsbefore it was required as the manuscript for the book was considerably delayed.

Writers

This delay was mainly due to the fact that *Battlefield* was originally to be novelised by its original scriptwriter, Ben Aaronovitch, following his success with *Remembrance of the Daleks*. However, fellow scriptwriter and noveliser Marc Platt stepped in when Aaronovitch admitted that he could not fit it in to his heavy freelance work schedule.

THE DRAMA EARLY WARNING SYNOPSIS

The second in our series of articles derived from data stored at the recently defunct BBC Script Unit

THE BBC introduced the Drama Early Warning Synopsis as a way of keeping an eye on the content of all its drama output. The basic premise for their operation was that each production office would draft a brief outline of its programme's forthcoming content, along with some production details which sometimes included short character descriptions. Once compiled, the summary was circulated on a distribution list that included heads of departments who checked that a programme under current production did not cover similar ground to any other. On at least one occasion a coincidence of content caused a Doctor Who story to be postponed. When the sixth floor of Television Centre discovered that the Doctor was due to become involved in a vampire story, *The Witchlords* (aka *State of Decay*) was pulled from the schedules as a prestigious version of Bram Stoker's Dracula was considered to be the more important project. It was felt that there was only so many vampires the public would be prepared to see on their screens in a given period of time.

What is most interesting about the synopsis format is that they were often written from very early drafts of scripts. This meant that the outlines for several Doctor Who stories included elements that failed to make it to our screens. They were also used as the basis of pre-publicity, and often some of the text would be marked as "Not For Publication", so as to avoid giving away too much in advance of the story's screening. For instance, the synopsis for *The War Machines* states that the addition of Polly and Ben to the TARDIS crew should be publicised "no earlier than 20th June [1966]". It then goes on to give a full-page breakdown of the story along with a rundown of the acting careers of Michael Craze (Ben), Anneke Wills (Polly), William Mervyn (Sir Charles Summer), John Harvey (Professor Brett), John Carter (Krimpton) and Alan Curtis (Major Green). Biographical details are also provided for Ian Stuart Black, Kit Pedler and, suprisingly, the designer Raymond London and the director Michael Ferguson.

The synopsis for *The Smugglers*, dated 20th May 1966, contains "Character Sketches of the New Companions"

BEN : 24, Able seaman (Radar), Cockney. Father, now dead, was wartime sailor and peacetime dock-crane driver. Mother married again to unsympathetic step-father. Ben trained at sea school from age of 15, having previously stowed away on cargo ship for adventure and to get away from unhappy home. Enjoys all sports, especially boxing and athletics — interested in all things mechanical and electrical and in true Navy fashion can turn his hand to most things, including basic cooking and sewing.

A realist, down to earth, solid, capable and cautious. Inclined on occasions to be shy.

POLLY : 24, private secretary to scientist. Father, country doctor in Devon, four brothers (one older — three younger). Happy and conventional middle-class background, she has never been tied to her mother's apron strings — they never know when to expect her home but when she arrives they are happy to see her. Has been, in turn, a travel courier — done a small amount of modelling (which she found irksome to her intelligence and feet).

She loves sports cars, watching motor racing, skiing, clothes, swimming — pet hates: pomposity, Deb's delights, conforming and officials (police to ticket-collectors).

Intelligent, imaginative, impulsive, inclined to act first, think later. She is totally undomesticated, cannot sew, knit or cook.

As with *The War Machines*, biographical details are also given on the main supporting cast along with the director and designer.

William Hartnell's departure in *The Tenth Planet* is marked by only one sentence :

This is the last serial in which the role of Dr Who will be played by William Hartnell, a new Doctor Who makes his bow at the beginning of the next story.

No hint is given who the new Doctor will be or how the change is to be made. Also, on the covering sheet of the synopsis, the author section includes the names of both Kit Pedler and Gerry Davis although a line has been added after printing that crosses out the latter. This was done for contractual reason — as script editor Gerry Davis was only allowed to write a set number of episodes per season. It must be remembered that although Pedler and Davis collaborated as a regular team, Kit never contributed a single line of dialogue; every word of their scripts was the product of Gerry's pen.

The *Power of the Daleks* synopsis introduces the Patrick Troughton Doctor without naming the new actor. In fact very little is given away about the regenerated time traveller at all.

Ben and Polly make a shattering discovery. Instead of the familiar Doctor they have travelled through space and time with, they are confronted with an apparent stranger, who claims to be a renewed version of Dr Who. Is he the real Doctor or isn't he? The pair suspend judgement but decide to watch the new Doctor very closely.

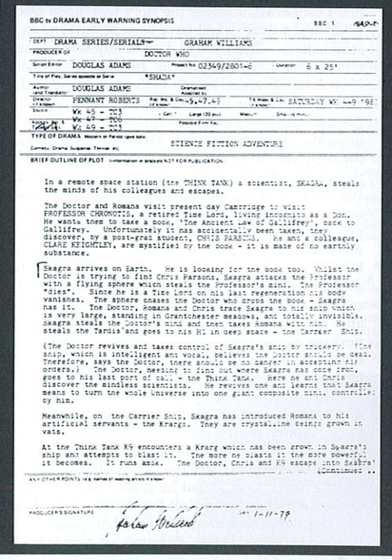
ONE OF the times when the synopsis shows a marked difference from the transmitted script is for *The Three Doctors*. Firstly it includes the character of Jamie, and secondly it assumes a far greater role for William Hartnell :

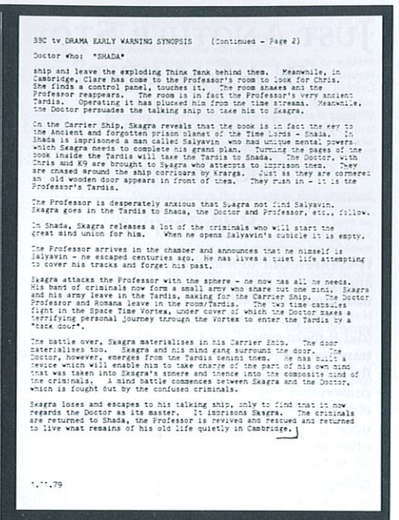
All three Doctors, together with Jo Grant, Jamie and an astonished Brigadier, eventually fall victim to the gel which transports them through the black hole into Omega's world of anti-matter, a strange fantastic place which is the creation of Omega's will.

LATER SYNOPSIS outlines included "Selling Points" that could be included in any publicity material put out by the BBC press office. The Selling Points for *Revenge of the Cybermen* were :

1. *Featuring Tom Baker as the Doctor with Elisabeth Sladen as Sarah Jane Smith and Ian Marter as Harry Sullivan.*
2. *Four -part adventure set in space.*
3. *The return of the Doctor's old enemies — the Cybermen.*

A SYNOPSIS was circulated for *Shada* that gave a full two-page breakdown of the plot, dated 1/11/79,


BBC tv DRAMA EARLY WARNING SYNOPSIS
DEPT: DRAMA SERIES/SERIALS — GRAHAM WILLIAMS
PRODUCER OF: DOCTOR WHO
Script Editor: DOUGLAS ADAMS — Project No: 0234/9/2601-6 — Duration: 6 x 25'
Title of Play, Series episode or Serial: *SHADA*
Author: DOUGLAS ADAMS — Dramatised:
Adapted by:
Director: PENNANT ROBERTS — Rec. Date & Dim: 5,6,7,/10 — TX Week & Dim: SATURDAY Wk 44-9 1980
Wk 43 - 203
Wk 44 - 203
Wk 45 - 203
TYPE OF DRAMA: SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURE
BRIEF OUTLINE OF PLOT — Information in brackets NOT FOR PUBLICATION.
In a remote space station (the THINK TANK) a scientist, SKAGRA, steals the minds of his colleagues and escapes.
The Doctor and Romana visit present day Cambridge to visit PROFESSOR CHRONOTIS, a retired Time Lord, living incognito as a Don. He wants them to take a book, 'The Ancient Law of Gallifrey', back to Gallifrey. Unfortunately it has accidentally been taken, they discover, by a post-grad student, CHRIS PARSONS. He and colleague, CLARE KEIGHLEY, are mystified by the book - it is made of no earthly substance.
Skagra arrives on Earth. He is looking for the book too. Whilst the Doctor is trying to find Chris Parsons, Skagra attacks the Professor with a flying sphere which steals the Professor's mind. The Professor "dies". Since he is a Time Lord on his last regeneration his body vanishes. The sphere chases the Doctor who grabs the book - Skagra has it. The Doctor, Romana and Chris trace Skagra to ship which is very large, standing in Grantchester meadows, and totally invisible. Skagra steals the Doctor's mind and then takes romana with him. He steals the Tardis and goes to his HQ in deep space - the Carrier Ship.
(The Doctor revives and takes control of Skagra's ship by trickery. The ship, which is intelligent and vocal, believes the Doctor should be dead. Therefore, says the Doctor, there should be no Master to accept his orders.) The Doctor, needing to find out where Skagra has come from, goes to his last port of ca. - the Think Tank. Here he and Chris discover the mindless scientists. He revives one and learns that Skagra means to turn the whole universe into one giant composite mind controlled by him.
Meanwhile, on the Carrier Ship, Skagra has introduced Romana to his artificial servants - the Krargs. They are crystalline beings grown in vats.
At the Think Tank K9 encounters a Krarg which has been grown in Skagra's ship and attempts to blast it. The more he blasts it the more powerful it becomes. It runs amok. The Doctor, Chris and K9 escape into Skagra's
(continued ..
ALL OTHER POINTS (e.g. names of leading artists if known)
PRODUCER'S SIGNATURE — Date 1-11-79


BBC tv DRAMA EARLY WARNING SYNOPSIS (Continued - Page 2)
Doctor Who: *SHADA*
ship and leave the exploding Think Tank behind them. Meanwhile, in Cambridge, Clare has come to the Professor's room to look for Chris. She finds a control panel, touches it. The room spaces and the Professor reappears. The room is in fact the Professor's very ancient Tardis. Operating it has plucked him from the time streams. Meanwhile, the Doctor persuades the talking ship to take him to Skagra.
On the Carrier Ship, Skagra reveals that the book is in fact the key to the Ancient and forgotten prison planet of the Time Lords - Shada. In Shada is imprisoned a man called Salyavin, who has unique mental powers which Skagra needs to complete his grand plan. Turning the pages of the book inside the Tardis will take the Tardis to Shada. The Doctor, with Chris and K9 are brought to Skagra who attempts to imprison them. They are chased around the ship corridors by Krargs. Just as they are cornered an old wooden door appears in front of them. They push in - it is the Professor's Tardis.
The Professor is desperately anxious that Skagra not find Salyavin. Skagra goes in the Tardis to Shada, the Doctor and Professor, etc., follow.
In Shada, Skagra releases a lot of the criminals who will start the great mind-union for him. When he opens Salyavin's cubicle it is empty.
The Professor arrives in the chamber and announces that he himself is Salyavin - he escaped centuries ago. He has lived a quiet life attempting to cover his tracks and forget his past.
Skagra attacks the Professor with the sphere - he now has all he needs. His band of criminals now form a small army who share but one mind. Skagra and his army leave in the Tardis, making for the Carrier Ship. The Doctor Professor and Romana leave in the room/Tardis. The two time capsules fight in the Space Time Vortex, under cover of which the Doctor makes a terrifying personal journey through the Vortex to enter the Tardis by a "back door".
The battle over, Skagra materialises in his Carrier Ship. The door materialises too. Skagra and his mind-zing surround the door. The Doctor, however, emerges from the Tardis behind them. He has built a device which will enable him to take charge of the part of his own mind that was taken into Skagra's sphere and thence into the composite mind of the criminals. A mind battle commences between Skagra and the Doctor, which is fought out by the confused criminals.
Skagra loses and escapes to his talking ship, only to find that it now regards the Doctor as its master. It imprisons Skagra. The criminals are returned to Shada, the Professor is revived and restored and returned to live what remains of his old life quietly in Cambridge.
..79

but a new covering sheet dated 10/12/79 and signed by Graham Williams carries the message :

BBC tv DRAMA EARLY WARNING SYNOPSIS — FOLLOW NOTES — BBC 1 BBC 2
DEPT: DRAMA SERIES/SERIALS — GRAHAM WILLIAMS — 1980
PRODUCER OF: DOCTOR WHO
Script Editor: DOUGLAS ADAMS — Project No: 0234/9/2601-6 — Duration: 6 x 25'
Title of Play, Series episode or Serial: *SHADA*
Author: DOUGLAS ADAMS — Dramatised:
Adapted by:
Director: PENNANT ROBERTS — Rec. Date & Dim: 5,6,7,/10 — TX Week & Dim: SATURDAY Wk 44-9 1980
Wk 43 - 203
Wk 44 - 203
Wk 45 - 203
TYPE OF DRAMA: SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURE
BRIEF OUTLINE OF PLOT — Information in brackets NOT FOR PUBLICATION.
DUE TO PRESENT SCHEDULES THIS 6-PART STORY HAS BEEN ABANDONED AND THEREFORE WILL NOT BE TRANSMITTED BETWEEN WEEKS 43 & 51.
AS SOON AS A REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME IS FOUND YOU WILL BE NOTIFIED.
(GRAHAM WILLIAMS)
ALL OTHER POINTS (e.g. names of leading artists if known)
10/12/79

ANOTHER INTERNAL BBC paper is the Audience Research Report. The title of these documents speaks for itself and are rather suprisingly regarded as "Confidential". These reports give "Size of Audience", "Reaction of Audience", a "Reaction Index", and a general overview of just what the viewing public thought of a particular programme. The report for The Lively Arts — *Whose Doctor Who* was based on a sample of 50 questionnaires and yielded the following results :

Half the sample described themselves as regular viewers of Dr Who and were particularly glad to renew their acquaintance with the earlier incumbents of the role. For purely nostalgic reasons some viewers would have liked even more clips from past programmes, particularly those featuring William Hartnell and Patrick Troughton.

Several of those reporting felt the children, besides being objectionably precocious, contributed nothing.

There can be few, if any, Doctor Who fans who have seen the programme that could argue with the report's findings. It is only a shame that this sort of research was done after the event rather than before. If this had been the case, *Whose Doctor Who* would have been a very different and much better look at the world's longest running science fiction programme.

Just Another Story in a Sandpit?

The Caves of Androzani

BBC Video; £10.99

Keith Topping

IT IS DIFFICULT to know quite where to begin when attempting to give an opinion on something as fixed in attitudes as *The Caves of Androzani*.

Basic questions of taste like 'did you enjoy it?' or 'did it make sense?' (or even, 'was it any good?') are transcended by the nature of the myth that surrounds the story. It is a piece of tv so wrapped up in its own context that almost any attempt to see beyond and be *objective* about it is pretty pointless. If it had been done at any other time, if the end had been anything other than it was, then it is probable that *The Cave of Androzani* would be treated in an entirely different way. But it wasn't, so it isn't.

The context that is inescapable is that this is 'the end of an era' and, like other 'end of an era' stories (notably *Logopolis* and *Talons of Weng-Chiang* before it) has acquired a reputation largely on the strength, not only of itself, in isolation, but of the entire era to which it is a climax. When, therefore, we talk about *Androzani*'s structure, form and content, it is actually the entire 1982-84 era that must be carried with it.

It is probably fair to say that *The Caves of Androzani* is the Sgt Pepper of the Doctor Who canon — in so much as it is an over-rated piece which is, nonetheless, a triumph of style over content. The individual elements are less important than the sum total. *Androzani* is Robert Holmes on auto-pilot, written by a man secure in the knowledge that he doesn't need to pull out anything other than the most basic of plots on which to hang his traditional strengths of dialogue, language and pushing the boundaries of taste. If *The Caves of Androzani* is the best ever Doctor Who story then Doctor Who is as unimaginative and derivative as any series. Worse, it is hollow and empty. If, on the other hand, *The Caves of Androzani* as a production is a good (if not exactly seminal) example of the strengths of the series then it is one that can, and should, be held high and proud — such is the paradox of four episodes that fluctuate wildly between standard elements and esoteric anarchy.

Doctor Who, almost from the very beginning, often worked best when it 'played' at being something other than a children's science-fiction series. This bogus aspect of the series can be seen at regular intervals when a succession of producers and writers would attempt to pretend that they were actually working on something quite different. *The Aztecs*, for example, is pretend Shakespearian melodrama, *Inferno* pretend-Quatermass, *Talons of Weng-Chiang* pretend-Sherlock Holmes, etc. ... There is nothing wrong with this, of course — indeed, the three examples quoted above are amongst the finest that the series has to offer, but they are all plagiaristic nonetheless, which means that, in creativity terms, it is difficult to justify them as anything other than straight-forward entertainment (let's not get too precious about this — it's only somebody's plot that's been ripped off!).

Likewise, *The Caves of Androzani* takes from all around — it is, at the basic level, the standard Doctor Who morality play, stealing in equal measures from such diverse sources as the fairy tale of Beauty and the Beast, Japanese revenge-warrior motifs and Jacobean tragedy (most notably in Morgus's frequent soliloquies into camera). What lifts *The Caves of Androzani* above the mere simplicity of its plot is in the characters that Robert Holmes chose to place within it. By putting the Doctor and companion slightly (and I do mean slightly) off-centre in story terms (have you noticed how about fifteen minutes of the third episode feature scenes in which both Peter Davison and Nicola Bryant are either not present or, if they are, are reduced to a non-speaking extra?) Holmes is able to develop to the maximum the potential of the rest of his characters.

As an example, remember that marvellous scene in the second episode in which Stotz and Krelper fight for control of the gunrunners? It's often cited as one of the most dramatic and visually thrilling in the history of Doctor Who. Right — now tell me the relevance to the plot? In short the answer is that there isn't any. The scene is simply used to increase the audience's understanding of the two characters.

Graeme Harper's job was made much easier by the quality of the script — in going to such heavyweight actors as John Normington, Maurice Roeves and Christopher Gable with such a script it must have been relatively easy to get them, and that's the difference between *The Caves of Androzani* and several ostensibly similar types of production — it features quality performances.

In mentioning Harper we come to another reason for *Androzani*'s continued popularity. Despite the fact that almost all of the faults that one can mention with regard to the story are aesthetic and therefore the responsibility of the director, Harper's swooping camera work and beautiful use of shadow and mood far outstrip memories of the pathetic Magma creatue — handled like an Oliver Postgate glove-puppet, let it be said!

One element of the story that I have always enjoyed is that, possibly for the first time in the history of Doctor Who, a writer uses *rad-fem* ideas and gets away with them. There are only two women present in *The Caves of Androzani* — Krau Timmin and Peri — both are intelligent, witty and strong in character, and both survive the four episodes, unlike their male counterparts who drop like flies, one after another. It is ironic that, in a story so steeped in the stench of death, that this should be so, but, perhaps, Holmes was making a subtle point about the male death-wish. Whoever said that the female of the species was deadlier than the male obviously hasn't seen this story recently.

Although Timmin survives, mostly through cunning which suggests that she is, in many ways, at least as tainted as her ex-boss Morgus, and Peri's survival is down to that age old macho-bastion chivalry (a thoroughly worthless and debased concept for anybody post-modernist enough to accept feminism as, at least theoretically, sound), the survival of the female at the expense of the male — indirectly in Timmin's case and directly in Peri's — provides a nice counterpoint to the argument that Doctor Who is the last outpost for misogyny.

If anybody had asked me, at the time of *Androzani*'s broadcast, whether the story was 'good Doctor Who' my answer would have been instant and in the affirmative. These days I'm not nearly so sure. Davison is blameless in this and his performance must rank alongside anything that can be offered up as a challenge for the finest ever performance by a Doctor. Davison's character often seemed to wallow in pain. From the amnesic struggle of *Castrovalva* through the trippy mind-games of *Kinda*, to the personal tragedy of *Earthshock*, *Terminus* and *Warriors of the Deep* and finally the desperate frustration of *Androzani*, there is a gentle masochism present which makes his ultimate sacrifice not only unsurprising but, in the end, inevitable. The fifth Doctor, with retrospect, carries a doomed quality about him. He is a typical paradox — the pacifist caught up in a terrible violent world of psychopaths and monsters. Perhaps his successor was right, perhaps he was becoming neurotic — as Nietzche says, "battle not with monsters, least a monster you become ..."

The most touching, and, in some ways, most disturbing aspect of *Androzani* is Jek's passion for Peri. Many reviewers have gone overboard in describing Jek as the ultimate Doctor Who villain: three-dimensional, urbane, charming and thoroughly mad. True — but he is also much more. In giving him lines that reflect the reason for his insanity, Holmes was clever, but not that clever — the plot had been used before, on numerous occasions. The strength of Jek lay not in the fact that the audience felt sorry for him (every decent 3-D villain as far back as Tobias Vaughn had *some* redeeming features going for him), but that the audience could identify with him. Let's put that another way : here we have a man with a proven ability in one field (robotics) who is cultured, civilised and sane. Introduce him to unbridled ambition and greed, in the shape of business partner Morgus, add the ingredients of what has subsequently happened to the two men, stir in a civil war and you have a molotov cocktail that will blow up in anyone's face. Jek's saving grace is that he understands his madness, knows that it is because of hatred for an individual rather than society in general. That he is also a vicious sociopath is often missed by observers looking for the good in Jek. Most of it died, along with his humanity, in the mudburst that took his looks and his mind. If Jek has a sympathy afforded to him, it should be given with a pinch of salt.

Most of the other characters work to greater or lesser degrees. Salateen is interesting because of the schizophrenic nature of the character — play the story without sound effects and you'd have trouble spotting the difference between the Robert Glennister twins!

Morgus reeks of evil. There is a lust about him that transcends normal loathing for the villain. His actions almost go beyond traditional concepts of right and wrong — this man is interested in nothing, not one single item, that is not concerned with power and the accumulation of wealth. If he is a political parody of anybody (and I've heard several real life politicians of the early 1980s mentioned as possible candidates) then the grotesque nature of the illusion leaves Spitting Image floundering in its wake.

I think, in retrospect, that I've probably been a little hard on *Caves of Androzani*. I checked back on my 1984 diary recently and found the following entry for March 16th: *"Androzani finished with a flourish. Magnificent regeneration. A story that will probably be looked back on as a 'classic' (horrible phrase) and rightly so. The end of an era, let's hope the next one is as good ..."* Ignore the youthful naivety with regard to what-came-next! Seven years of cynicism over opportunities missed, false starts, broken promises and chances wasted might have left me unsure as to what still constitutes good Doctor Who, but there is no denying that *The Caves of Androzani* still holds together remarkably well.

The regeneration, of course, is still the one by which all others must be judged — a swirl of electronics and no flashbacks, the 'bleed' from one incarnation into the next is handled with a confidence that we all hoped boded well for the future. Sadly, and again with hindsight, the three-line introduction of Colin Baker, complete with all of the faults that the following era would contain (arrogance, cynicism and aggression), can be seen as the product not only of another writer (Eric Saward's shadow looms large) but of a completely different series altogether. The regeneration sequence of *The Caves of Androzani* marks the final chapter of Doctor Who as an easily identifiable format — much of what followed was thrilling and challenging television, but it was never, quite, the same programme again.

The video is, of course, a 'must' for every Doctor Who library — it will be bought by thousands and will be seen by an entirely new generation of fans who have grown up in its wake. I hope that these 90s children will give the story the time and attention that it requires. I'm sure they will appreciate the power and the anger of the story, even if they are bored by the politics and amused by the monster.

It probably isn't the masterpiece that it is often made out to be, but it carries a quality that few stories from the last twenty-eight years can match and its slickness is also its salvation.

Released January 6, 1992

An Era of Excellence

IAN WHEELER follows up a recent defence of the Fifth Doctor's character with an examination of the stories of that era

DUNCAN HARVEY'S article 'The One Between the Two Bakers' *[DWB #93]* gave a fair and balanced appraisal of the fifth Doctor's character, but rather more needs to be said. What's needed is not just a fresh look at Davison's portrayal but rather a full reassessment of the stories in which he starred. Hopefully, with BBC Video planning to release such stories as *Resurrection of the Daleks* and *The Caves of Androzani*, this is about to happen.

John Nathan-Turner's first season as producer had proved to be less than fully successful. Production standards may have been very high and the 'look' of the programme very slick, but generally Season 18 lacked the spirit of Doctor Who, with more emphasis on science than on fiction. The whole thing just seemed too artificial and, with a disappointing average viewing figure of 5.8 million, clearly all was not well.

Davison arrived and change was gradual. Season 19's opener was similar in style to the previous year's offerings, but nevertheless gave a solid introduction to the Doctor's new persona. As the season progressed, more 'traditional' stories emerged, notably *The Visitation* and *Earthshock*. In these adventures good storylines took precedence over pseudo-science. 'Real' monsters in the form of the Terileptils and the Cybermen once again terrified (or at least delighted) children.

Interestingly, both *The Visitation* and the Cyberman story came from the pen of script-editor Eric Saward. As the man responsible for the majority of Davison's episodes, he must take much of the credit for the fifth Doctor's success. It is rather a pity that Saward receives so much criticism from fans of Doctor Who, for he is actually a very competent action/adventure writer, with a good understanding of the Doctor Who concept. Indeed, *Earthshock* gets my vote as the programme's finest ever story; a classic in every respect.

On the whole then, Season 19 was a great improvement on its predecessor. Even the historical *Black Orchid* was rather better than many had feared and only *Time Flight* came anywhere close to being a total failure. The production team were rewarded with healthy ratings and some positive press reviews.

Season 20 was a somewhat weaker batch of episodes. Omega returned in *Arc of Infinity* and, although wearing a much improved costume, failed to achieve the impact of his first appearance back in 1973. The Brigadier's return in *Mawdryn Undead* was also disappointing, not because of Nicholas Courtney's acting but due to the rather unispiring, not to mention very confusing, script.

But things weren't all bad. Fresh ideas were coming through, perhaps best illustrated by Barbara Clegg's use of a racing yacht in space in *Enlightenment*. We also had an intriguing new companion in the form of Turlough. His desire to kill the Doctor gave the season a linking theme, but one rather less restraining than the trial concept which so saddled Colin Baker's Doctor.

NO STORY ever created a stir quite like 'The Caves of Androzani'. At the time of its first and only broadcast in 1984, it was instantly acclaimed as the all-time 'Doctor Who' classic and went on to top the DWB series survey no less than three times running.

But was the story really deserving of such status? Or was it simply a pearl in a sea of mediocrity? Indeed would it have been elevated to such heights had it been made at any time within the series first 15 years? It was, afterall, a simple, straightforward action/adventure in which the Doctor was merely an accessory to the plot, and it featured none of the famous hallmarks from the past to boost it on. But it was also a meticulously structured and tightly-paced story by the grand master himself, Robert Holmes, and miraculously (and beautifully) combined with a director of equal calibre, Graeme Harper; one of the very few perfect marriages during '80s 'Doctor Who!

Nevertheless, time has had some effect, and in the 1989 series survey Androzani succumbed to the might of 'The Talons of Weng-Chiang' - another Holmes perennial gothic - and in next issue the 1991 series survey results will reveal that it has slipped further still to 4th position.

DWB was probably responsible for more Androzani hype in the '80s than any other outlet, and so it seems only fitting that we should confidently predict that its long overdue video release next January will see the revival of Androzanimania - an incomparable classic...

GARY LEIGH

1983 was anniversary year and *The Five Doctors* provided an appropriate celebration. Not as bad as it is made out to be, the story was a glorious reunion of old friends and enemies. The plot was basic and included some quite spectacular action. Davison held the whole thing together marvellously and managed not to be overshadowed by his fellow Doctors. Whatever else could be said of this anniversary adventure, it was great fun.

Davison's last season was almost certainly his best. Even the rather weak opener, *Warriors of the Deep*, was very watchable. *Resurrection of the Daleks*, again a creation of Eric Saward, improved greatly on the previous Dalek story and introduced us to Terry Molloy's superb portrayal of Davros. We were also given Lytton, played by the late Maurice Colbourne, whose popularity ensured his return the following year.

Often cited as John Nathan-Turner's greatest achievement, *The Caves of Androzani* concluded Davison's era in a manner more stylish than we could ever have hoped for. Robert Holmes once again lived up to his title of Doctor Who's greatest writer and Davison himself turned in one of his best performances. Excellent acting from the likes of Martin Cochrane and Christopher Gable added icing to the cake. The story was a joy from start to finish and there was more than a tinge of sadness when the fifth Doctor disappeared in a blaze of colour.

Much has happened since then. Davison's stories have generally been regarded as better than those which followed but by no means as those of Jon Pertwee or Tom Baker. The eighties as a whole are seen as something of a mess.

For my money, the Davison years represent one of Doctor Who's most consistent eras. Production values had never been better and the writers were producing enjoyable and thought-provoking material. We were presented with a variety of companions and some memorable villains. Even the constant appearances of the Master were bearable, given the adequate length of the seasons. The revamped title sequence and theme arrangement were perfect for the time, making early 80s Doctor Who a very glossy package indeed.

When Peter Davison left Doctor Who, it was the end of an era. Never again would the actor playing the Doctor have of his own free will. Never again would the programme be so respected by viewers and BBC management alike.

Peter was right to leave whenhe did. If only John Nathan-Turner had done the same, he would be regarded as one of the show's greatest producers.

Now we await the Davison video releases with interest and anticipation. Will we witness a revival or merely the confirmation of old views? I can't wait to find out.

Having a Ball

Marlowe Theatre, Canterbury, September 1991

Anthony Brown

WHEN A play called *Having a Ball* is set in a vasectomy clinic, you know what to expect — a Whitehall farce in which more than just trousers are dropped. And sure enough, Sylvester McCoy's latest theatrical venture is fast, frenetic, funny and definitely *not* for those who'd prefer to remain ignorant of the finer details of Time Lord anatomy ...

But as you might expect of a play written by Alan Bleasdale, there's more to *Having a Ball* than that. Anyone who saw GBH will recognise *Having a Ball*'s fusion of politics, childhood trauma and surreal comedy. Unfortunately *Having a Ball* succeeds only as a farce.

To the plot : Sylvester plays Lenny Anderson, a frightened little man who is about to chicken out of his vasectomy for the umpteenth time when he spots 'Big Jobs' Barrows, the bully who made his schooldays a misery, booking in. Also waiting for an operation is Mr Thomas, the Thatcherite Tory who closed the NHS hospital in which the clinic's head (and indeed sole) nurse used to work. While Lenny takes his revenge in the waiting room, Thomas's wife, Doreen, roams the corridors with her only friend, a gin bottle. Between the two of them, events are about to get out of control ...

Both Sylvester and the excellent Fiona McArthur (Doreen) are brilliantly funny, while the rest of the cast are competent, if overshadowed, lacking the opportunities the others have to bring the house down. But this sums up the play's problem. Taken purely as a farce it is superb — one of the most hilarious nights out I've had in a long time. But midway through the second half, immediately after a side-splitting sequence in which even the cast had difficulty keeping a straight face, *Having a Ball* turns all serious and collapses.

Alan Bleasdale was obviously trying to achieve a shocking change from black comedy to personal tragedy. (He's done it often enough before.) Unfortunately the preceding farce has been just too funny for this to work unless the drama is superbly done — and as we all know, Sylvester is at his worst when suddenly expected to become a serious and commanding figure. Far too many of his Doctor Who stories have shown this weakness, and it's all too obvious here.

"Australians have the courage of their ancestors' convictions," shouts Lenny, adding "I've been trying to slip that in somewhere for years." Do I spot an ad-lib, or has Alan Bleasdale been watching *Silver Nemesis*? Several lines bear suspicious resemblance to some of the better funnies of the McCoy era, and I can't help wondering whether they were in the original script. Certainly the production feels as if certain cast members (naming no names) had rather more influence on it than the director, who should perhaps have kept a tighter rein. Though it would be less funny, the play as a whole would benefit if the comic elements were held down just a little, and the extended opening sequence, whose lack of dialogue and preponderance of business (ie. clowning) mark it out as a rehearsal addition, should definitely go. It's not even funny, and very nearly kills the play.

Having a Ball is worth seeing. Be warned, there's prolonged nudity (Sylvester must be starkers for close on an hour) and a lot of bad language (whose removal would destroy the best line of the play), but if you can cope with that you won't see anthing funnier this side of the Only Fools and Horses Christmas show. But I went to see it more for Bleasdale than McCoy and hope one day to see a more balanced production — with or without Sylvester.

Doctorin' the Tardis

The Timelords/KLF; CD single TVT4025-2; £6.99

David Gibbs

FOR THOSE of you vacationing on the planet Mongo during the summer of 1988, *Doctorin' the Tardis* was a minor hit in the UK, featuring the unlikely mix of Gary Glitter, Sweet and Ron Grainer's Dr Who theme tune. Its perpetrators, The Timelords, alias the Justified Ancients of Mu-Mu (the JAMMs), appeared to come from nowhere occupy the number one spot briefly with the aid of a dubious police car, and then disappeared without trace.

Little did we suspect then that the JAMMs would metamorphose into the KLF ('Kopyright Liberation Front', apparently) who, after toying with other people's samples (ABBA made them burn every single copy of their 'seminal' 1987 album for the rather sadistic injuries they inflicted upon *Dancing Queen*) and experimenting with 'ambient house' (ie. lots of sheep and waves), were reborn in the 90s as a 'rave' dance outfit, complete with rappers, countless remixes, and a dedicated club following. The Timelords, merry pranksters of yore, are now Big, hence the opportunist release of this CD in the States, available in Britain on import.

You can tell its opportunist because it has KLF in big letters on the cover, disregarding the fact that four of the five tracks on the single were released under the name of the Timelords. But this is my only reservation in an otherwise excellent package, redesigned to fit the CD format but retaining the style of the original (but thankfully minus the "Hi, I'm Ford Timelord, I'm a car and I've made a record" banalities).

Of the five tracks three originally appeared on the 12" single — the radio mix, the club mix (8 minutes of the same), and the instrumental 'minimal' mix, often cited as one of the best rearrangements of the theme tune around. On top of this we also get the Gary Glitter version (3.26 edit) and the original seven minute instrumental version of the KLF's smash hit *What Time is Love?* This last is doubtless included to tempt casual KLF fans into buying a single with less, um, street cred than normal. But it's quite jolly in a mindless sort of way, and does serve to put the Timelords track into some kind of context, historically speaking.

Released by New York's TVT records, the CD is widely available in Britain on import, and you should be able to find it at your local Our Price or HMV, or via one of the many mail order companies advertising in NME or Record Collector.

TREK NEWS

THE NEXT GENERATION story to feature Leonard Nimoy as Federation Ambassador Spock will be a two-parter. Nimoy will, however, only be seen in the second part.

Filming is now complete and the story, **The Unification,** also sees the return of Mark Lenard as Sarek. Jonathan Frakes has said that Sarek will die in this story, which should stir fan protest if true. There was unhappiness with Sarek's first appearance on **The Next Generation** - in the third season episode **Sarek** - because he was shown as suffering from a progressive disease akin to senility. It was thought that he might be cured in this special story. In any case, the basic plot concerns Spock's mysterious disappearance into the Romulan Empire and Captain Picard is asked to go on a dangerous undercover mission to discover his whereabouts. These will comprise the seventh and eighth episodes of the new season, to be broadcast during November.

The fourth new episode will be **Silicon Avatar,** signalling the return of the Crystaline Entity from **Data Lore.** The fifth episode is entitled **Disaster** and is known to include a scene in which Data's head is removed! The sixth episode features the return of Wil Wheaton as Wesley Crusher, who is on a visit from Starfleet Academy. This episode will include a number of family scenes and a surprise welcome back party for the ensign - who may just also find time to save the ship while he is there.

Patrick Stewart has been assigned episode 23 to direct later this season, and has said that he and Gates McFadden are aggitating with the writers for more stories involving Captain Picard and Dr. Crusher more closely.

A controversy of sorts was launched when The Advocate - a national gay newsmagazine - ran a story claiming that gay crew members would be added to the cast of **The Next Generation** for the fifth season. This was the culmination of a letter writing campaign directed at the producers of the series which Richard Arnold acknowledges has generated the most mail they have received on any subject. However, the story seemed to suggest that this would result in either new regular cast members being added or in a story devoted to this particular issue, neither of which appears to be true. Gene Roddenberry has said that homosexuality will no longer be a devisive issue by the 24th century and Ron Moore of the writing staff has also suggested that the subject itself would not form the basis of an episode. At most, what will probably be seen is some kind of reference to same-sex couples in the crew in moments devoted to crew life in Ten Forward.

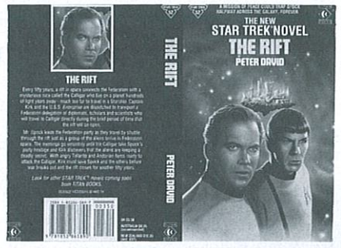
Ten Forward may also double as a maternity ward as it is rumoured that at some point Worf will deliver Keiko O'Brien's baby there. The child might be too frightened to cry. Worf's own son, Alexander, is also scheduled to appear.

The Next Generation won two Emmys this year, for sound editing and sound mixing for **The Best of Both Worlds** part two.

New Paramount Studio President Brandon Tartikoff, who comes from a successful stint at NBC Television, seems to be more interested in the television series being produced at Paramount than in the film projects the studio has on tap. He is impressed by the financial success of the syndicated series and is reportedly interested in "offshoot" shows. This has only fuelled talk that Paramount would like to find a television series idea for Wil Wheaton, and also added to speculation that if Paramount moves **The Next Generation** cast on into feature films it may seek to launch a third **Trek** television series in its wake.

LeVar Burton, who has not done any convention appearances since the start of **STTNG** has finally decided to join the ranks of his fellow cast members. He has just appeared at a fan-run event in the Baltimore area. Brent Spiner, who has done only one convention to date, has signed to Creation conventions in Chicago (October) and Philadelphia in November.

KATHLEEN TOTH



PUBLISHED BY TITAN BOOKS ON NOVEMBER 21st AT £3.50

KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER - which we reported way back in issue 73 as having been purchased by the BBC - has finally been scheduled.

BBC2 will start running the series in a weekly late night slot from October as part of their new weekday format which will see each evening ending with a horror show!

The two highly successful **Kolchak** films, **The Night Stalker** and **The Night Strangler,** were recently aired late at night by BBC1 over two consecutive Saturdays acting as a prelude for the classic American comedy/horror series, which premièred Stateside on September 13th 1974.

Twenty episodes were made in all but the series was largely ignored by British television, bar Central who screened about a dozen episodes in the early '80s. The films have already aired on several ITV regions as well as being networked on BBC2 in 1987. **A major DWB feature soon...**

A THUNDERBIRDS COMIC is being launched on October 19th to tie-in with the success of the BBC2 repeats.

Mainly culled from material which appeared in TV21, there will also be four to five pages of new articles and photos. The magazine, published by Fleetway Publications, will be edited by Alan Fennell, who wrote many of the original **Thunderbirds** episode and who also edited TV21.

QUATERMASS II was seen by 1.96 million viewers when it was screened on Bank Holiday Monday as part of the Lime Grove Tribute.

Channel 4 has now acquired the BBC programmes which it will be screening as part of its Television Heaven line-up. The nearest thing of interest to telefantasy fans that it has purchased are some black and white editions of...Magic Roundabout!

RED DWARF season five has now entered production for transmission in early 1992.

KATHLEEN TOTH continues her look at the fourth season of The Next Generation

23) THE HOST — 18TH MAY 1991

WRITTEN BY MICHEL HORVAT; DIRECTOR MARVIN RUSH; MUSIC BY JAY CHATTAWAY; VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR ROBERT LEGATO

Gates McFadden finally gets her wish that Dr Crusher find some sex in space, but probably not quite in the form that she and fans had in mind. The good doctor has a whirlwind romance with an alien ambassador who is most definitely more than meets the eye — raising a number of ethical issues that provoked considerable discussion and some condemnation.

Doctor Crusher confides to her personal log that there is someone new in her life. That someone is Ambassador Odan, a Trill diplomat who has been aboard ship preparing to mediate a dispute that threatens to cause war between the two moons of Peliozel. The doctor has been swept up in a passionate affair with the handsome Odan, although she has tried to keep the relationship a secret — no easy task when the ever-inquisitive Data is helping Odan with research on the causes of the dispute. What neither Beverly Crusher nor Data realise is that the Trill are far from simple humanoids.

Odan is called to a meeting with the Governor of Peliozel, who says she knew his father, another diplomat who managed to resolve the last great quarrel between the two moons many years ago. Now one of the moons has found a new energy source that has adverse effects upon the atmosphere and viability of the other moon. Governor Leka fears that war will soon break out and her people will take sides in the conflict. Both sides have reluctantly agreed to meet with Odan and he announces that he will shuttle down to the meeting rather than use the transporter. After he leaves his quarters, Counsellor Troi tells Picard that she is worried by the fluctuations of emotion she senses in the ambassador, but the captain points out that this may be normal for the Trill, about whom little is actually known.

A still puzzled counsellor goes to the Enterprise beauty parlour, where she is surprised to find Beverly Crusher. When Troi says she did not know that Beverly ever came here, the uncomfortable Doctor admits that it feels good to indulge yourself sometimes. It becomes clear that they are not just talking about getting a facial and Beverly grumbles that she wishes Deanna were not "so empathic", but the Betazoid tells her "I don't think it's a secret — you've been glowing." Still, the counsellor lets her friend know about her uneasiness with Odan and asks how well can Beverly know him.

The relationship is not as obvious to everyone as it has been to Deanna. Odan goes for a last meeting with Picard before attempting to mediate the dispute on Peliozel. The captain is naturally curious as to how he will proceed, but Odan says he works by instinct, not prearranged plan. The ambassador compliments Picard on the excellence of the assistance he has gotten from his crew, especially Dr Crusher. In fact, the Trill goes on and on about "Doctor Beverly", to Picard's growing discomfort. When Odan asks how committed does he think Beverly is to staying with Starfleet, the captain is plainly shocked as she replies that he could not presume to speak for her. Odan repeats his insistence that he would rather take a shuttle down to the planet rather than transport and Commander Riker undertakes to personally pilot him.

When the shuttle is attacked by an unidentified vessel, Odan is injured but still insists that he cannot be transported back to the ship to escape danger because the process would kill him. Riker manages to get the damaged craft back to the Enterprise, but Dr Crusher is in for a shock of her own when Odan arrives in sick bay. The strange readings she is getting suggest that a parasite is at work in the ambassador's body and she prepares to remove it, only to be stopped by Odan who tells her that the "parasite" is him — the body she sees is just a host. The host has been injured and is dying but it is the other creature that must survive.

Beverly later briefs the bridge crew on this startling development. She has learned that the Trill are a joint species, consisting of a host and a symbiote. It is the symbiote that they know as "Odan". They must contact the Trill to send a replacement host. In fact, Odan's father did not negotiate the last treaty settlement between the moons. It was Odan himself while with another host. He refused to use the transporter because it would have damaged the symbiote. The dilemma now is that it will take some 40 hours for a replacement to arrive but Odan will only be able to survive for another hour or two without a host and an obvious choice, Data, is not suitable. Riker volunteers to serve as a temporary host, although there are no guarantees that a human can function in such a capacity.

The doctor has no choice but to undertake the implantation, despite the lack of any information on the process. Riker is nearly lost, but then seems to stabilise, but when he awakens it is Odan who speaks to Beverly. Odan faces Governor Leka in his new body and struggles to convince her that he is the same ambassador that she met before — and also his own father. She reluctantly comes to accept him as Odan, but fears the delegates for the moons will not. He needs further treatment while they await word from the disputants, and discovers that Beverly is angry that he never told her that he was really two beings. He protests that it never occurred to him to tell her, and that "whatever I seem to be, I am Odan, who loved you."

Later Deanna Troi finds a very disturbed Beverly in Ten Forward. Beverly is tormented with questions about what it was she loved about Odan and how she should deal with the fact that he now inhabits the body of a man she thinks of as a sort of brother. She tells Deanna she would give anything not to feel the way she does now, but the counsellor tells her not to regret loving and "if you can feel those things from the man we know as Will Riker, accept them." Odan meets with the two antagonistic representatives of the moons and is able to persuade them that he is who he claims to be, but they still want eight hours to decide if they will allow him to mediate their dispute. In the meantime, Riker's body begins to reject the symbiote and Dr Crusher can only partly suppress the reaction that is making Odan very ill. Picard informs him that he has been accepted as mediator but it will still be another 18 hours before a new Trill host arrives. Odan vows that he will find a way to keep going and conduct the peace talks. Beverly Crusher finally decides she can no longer reject Odan's protestations of love and goes to his cabin.

As the peace conference is about to start, Odan refuses to accept any further medication, since it is killing Riker, and makes Beverly promise to remove him at the end of the day, whether the new host has arrived or not. Jean-Luc Picard keeps vigil alone with Beverly and tries to comfort her, saying "whatever else I may be to you, I'm your friend". Odan averts war but collapses immediately after the negotiations are concluded. Picard orders the Enterprise to travel at maximum speed to meet the Trill vessel carrying a new host but Odan has to be removed and placed in stasis. Dr Crusher maintains a weary watch in sickbay, despite her captain's insistence that she needs to rest, so that she can begin the implantation as soon as the new host arrives. Worf brings the Trill to sickbay immediately upon arrival, but Beverly's relief is quickly changed to shock as she meets the woman who will provide a new body for Odan. The implantation is successful but Beverly sits in silence as the Trill assures her "I am still Odan and I still love you." Finally the doctor tells Odan that it may be a human failing but she cannot live with this kind of uncertainty, saying "perhaps one day our ability to love won't be so limited."

Although there was much discussion as to whether or not this story was homophobic, there was equal controversy about the ethic of the relationship between the Trill symbiote and its 'host'. Since it appeared that the Trill completely supplants the host's own mental and emotional being, the morality of the relationship was not obvious if the hosts are intelligent, self-aware beings. At the least, the benefit of the relationship for the hosts was not obvious. Odan's explanation of why he had not told Beverly about himself was also unconvincing coming from a diplomat who must have been accustomed to dealing with species who did not have his special nature, and who should know that it was bound to be startling to a human, if not horrifying. Likewise, more than a few eyebrows were raised at Deanna Troi's supposed willingness to encourage Beverly to continue her affair once Odan inhabited Riker's body, with the ethical aspects of such an action being but one of the obstacles that could be imagined there. And, of course, the writers continued their teasing approach to just what Beverly and Jean-Luc may in fact be to each other.

24) THE MIND'S EYE — 1ST JUNE 1991

TELEPLAY BY RENE ECHEVARRIA; STORY BY KEN SCHAFER AND RENE ECHEVARRIA; DIRECTOR DAVID LIVINGSTON; MUSIC BY DENNIS MCCARTHY; VISUAL EFFECTS SUPERVISOR DAN CURRY

Danger appears from a most unexpected source as the Enterprise becomes involved once again with the tangled affairs of the Klingon Empire. The fate of the crew seems to rest in the hands of a shadowy enemy who has yet to be revealed and Geordi has to doubt his own sanity.

Geordi has got a rare break from the Enterprise. Captain Picard has dispatched him alone in a shuttlecraft to attend a conference on Risa — and sent him on his way a few days early with orders to enjoy himself. Geordi does his best to get in a holiday mood by getting a drink and selecting some relaxing music, but his journey is abruptly interrupted when a Romulan ship uncloaks in his path and he is beamed aboard before he can get off a distress call.

Captain Picard has his own worries. Once again the Klingon High Council has called upon his services to avert conflict within the Empire. A special emissary, Ambassador Kell, is being sent to a rebellious Klingon colony with the unusual task of making peace with them. The Empire cannot spare the effort just now to subdue them and can always conquer them again later. However, the governor of Krios has charged that the Federation is assisting the rebels and that could mean the end of the alliance with the Klingons. Kell asks Picard to take him to Krios and help investigate these allegations, noting that he has the respect of many on the Council. Picard agrees to the request but also insists on assigning Worf to assist in the investigation, despite Kell's discomfort with Worf's official dishonour (in SINS OF THE FATHER).

Geordi finds himself welomed by name aboard the Romulan ship and a man who resembles him is fitted with a fake VISOR and dispatched to take his place on Risa while the real Geordi is subjected to a kind of mental conditioning under the direction of a woman who remains hidden from view. Her assistant insists that there will be no traces of what they have done when they are finished.

Worf is offended when Ambassador Kell asks him if he should believe Picard's denial that the Federation is promoting rebellion on Krios. The lieutenant says that his captain does not lie and will not disappoint the High Council. Kell seems to have a message from the Council for Worf as well. He tells him that some members of the Council would thank him for killing Diras (in REUNION), although Worf points out that he did so for his own reasons.

Before releasing Geordi, the Romulans take him to a simulated Ten Forward and order him to kill Chief O'Brien. After some hesitation, Geordi uses a phaser on the simulated O'Brien and calmly takes his place at a table with friends. The mysterious woman orders more conditioning to overcome the last bit of resistance they have encountered.

As the Enterprise arrives at Krios, its Chief Engineer rejoins them after his stay on Risa. He seems full of good cheer and talks enthusiastically about the seminar he attended. Counsellor Troi is pleased that he had such a good time — she tells him that he is more relaxed than she has ever seen him. She probes more deeply and learns that he met a woman on Risa as well, but Geordi says she would not be interested in all the stuff he did there.

Data detects a brief energy fluctuation in the E-band. Riker asks what could cause such a thing and Data has no answer. Given the tensions that exist on Krios, Riker orders the android to monitor for any further activity. Picard beams down to Krios to meet a very hostile governor who wants the Council to crush the rebellion. He claims that Federation medical supplies and weapons have been found in the hands of the rebels. Picard denies that Federation weapons would have been sent for such purposes, but Riker agrees that the weapons appear to be Federation issue. The governor hurls a Klingon insult at Picard and is surprised when the captain makes an equally venomous reply in perfect Klingon. For the first time a bit of respect comes into his tone as he says, "you swear well Picard, you must have Klingon blood in your veins."

Geordi enters Ten Forward and looks around for something. He picks up a drink and then walks towards O'Brien, only to spill the drink all over his friend's tunic. After profuse apologies for his "accident", Geordi joins Data to conduct tests on one of the weapons found on Krios. Although it appears to be a Federation phaser rifle, they discover that its operating system departs from Starfleet standard. They eventually conclude that it has been charged from a Romulan power source, although the governor remains sceptical about this discovery.

Data discovers new E-band transmissions, but from a different location. Riker asks him to try to trace these transmissions to their source. A short time later Geordi enters one of the cargo areas on a strange mission to reroute the transporters by changing computer chips and then erasing his modifications after ordering the beaming of cargo to Krios. An outraged governor soon contacts Picard to announce that they have intercepted weapons that the Enterprise had attempted to transport to the rebels. He sends attack vessels to surround the ship and warns Picard not to try to break orbit. Data is able to confirm an unauthorised transporter transmission but cannot determine where it originated. Ambassador Kell persuades the governor to consult with the High Council before taking action against the Enterprise, allowing the crew to try to trace the power flow that was diverted. They eventually find evidence in the cargo bay of very skilful tampering with the chips. Worf demands to know who would have the ability to make such alterations and is told that only four people could manage such a complex task. Two of them are Geordi and Data, and only Geordi has no alibi for the crucial time period, but he is above suspicion. Data has noted more E-band activity and he thinks one or two more transmissions could allow him to isolate the source.

Kell warns Picard that Governor Vagh is not noted for patience but Picard makes it clear that he will defend his ship from any attack. However, the ambassador seems in a jovial mood back in his quarters as he prepares to enjoy a huge Klingon feast. He has one bit of business to take care of first, though. Geordi visits him and Kell says he will go to the surface and bring back Vagh to inspect the cargo bay with Picard. When that happens he orders Geordi to kill Vagh in front of everyone and proclaim that he has acted in the name of Starfleet and Kriosian independence.

Geordi finds that he cannot sleep and suddenly feels a need to contact O'Brien. He does not know why he called when the Chief answers his summons. He goes to Dr Crusher for help in sleeping. She notices a minor irregularity in his visual cortex and speculates that his VISOR may be malfunctioning.

Picard welcomes a very bitter Governor Vagh, who reluctantly allowed Kell to bring him to the Enterprise to see evidence that might disprove Federation complicity in the rebellion. Meanwhile Data continues his E-band research and notes that the transmissions are similar to human brainwave patterns. The computer confirms that they might be picked up by a device that was directly connected to the visual cortex. Data goes to the shuttlebay to inspect the craft that carried Geordi on his trip to Risa while the engineer himself is making his way to the cargo area. Data finds microscopic evidence that the shuttle was hit with a tractor beam and Geordi is momentarily delayed with questions from O'Brien. Data finds variations in the shuttle computer's memory chips, and evidence that they were replicated by Romulan technology. When he cannot raise Geordi on his communicator he contacts Worf and tells him to take Geordi into custody.

Worf is baffled by this order until he sees LaForge approaching the group in the cargo bay with a phaser in hand. The governor's aides mistake Worf for a threat and restrain him until Picard averts the assassination. The governor now accuses the Federation of attempted murder but Data explains that Geordi was abducted by Romulans and conditioned in some way to be their unwitting agent through the E-band transmissions to his brain. Whoever issued those orders would have to have been in close proximity to Geordi each time an order was given. Data has determined that only two persons were in the right position on all three occasions that he recorded E-band transmissions. If these two, Picard and Kell, would submit to being searched he believes that a transmitter will be found on the guilty party. Kell is outraged, spluttering that he is a Klingon and will not be searched by anyone on board the ship. Vagh very quickly agrees, saying they will return Kell to Krios and search him themselves. Kell loses all desire to leave the Enterprise after that and asks Picard for asylum. Picard says that he will be happy to grant it to him — as soon as he is absolved of this crime — and allows the Klingons to take Kell with them.

Geordi meets with Counsellor Troi later in what will be the first of many sessions to try to deal with what was done to him. He is deeply disturbed and confused, insisting that he remembers everything about his trip to Risa. But Troi asks him to start with what he remembers about the shuttle trip and leads him to remember seeing a Romulan ship. Geordi is more alarmed than ever and feels that he is not sure of anything any more. Deanna gently assures him that it will take a long time, but they will reconstruct his memory.

The face of the Romulan commander is not revealed until the season cliffhanger, but the voice used in this episode was familiar to many who heard it as Denise Crosby's. It is apparent that the Romulans continue to not only meddle in Klingon affairs but also have excellent information on the personnel of the Enterprise and their movements. Larry Dobkin is impressive as Kell, a character who seems similar to K'mpec at first. This episode adds another chapter to the notion that Picard has become a master of the Klingon language with the amusing cursing scene. First-time director David Livingston employs some unusual camera angles to convey Geordi's abnormal state of mind and the threat he poses.

BLAKE'S 7 Cassette 13

DEAR OH DEAR, what have we got here? From the delightfully camp 'Gambit', which pointed to a marvellous new direction for season three, 'Blake's 7' plunges straight back into its tedious alien planets and tribesmen mode with a script from the pen of Allan Prior, who delivered the atrocious 'Horizon' earlier in season two.

God, what a bore. The aforementioned tribesmen take it upon themselves to - wait for it - kidnap Jenna and marry her off to their chief. What a surprise. The only addition to this shock (schlock?) plot is that Vila gets taken on as the Chief's fool (they use the word "fool", but neither Vila nor the fool he replaces in fact perform the function of fool. The giver of unwelcome advice in this story becomes a separate character who has plots of her own, however the image of Vila as jester would occur again in the superb season three episode 'Sarcophagus'). Avon, meanwhile, acts completely out of character by nipping off to zap a ship that he has no decent reason to suppose is Travis' but probably knows that if he doesn't he'll still be in teleport range and it won't be possible for Jenna to get kidnapped by the hairy tribesmen. Eventually the eponymous Keeper is found and Blake and co. shoot off to Star One and the season finale.

The basic problem with this episode, apart from the fact that no one in it seems to want to do any acting, is that it has difficulty serving any function other than to enable Blake to find where Star One is located. The support story is neither strong nor interesting enough to make the episode worthwhile in its own right. In fact it is hardly a story at all, merely a sequence of events. Perhaps that was all 'Gambit' was, but at least that was interesting. Furthermore it doesn't follow the seasons' overarching narrative. Travis and Servalan seem once again to be on good terms and working together - hardly likely after what she did to him in the previous episode. She even lets him nip off in her ship, and yet in the next episode she's back at HQ and he's plotting to annihilate the entire galaxy.

Bruce Purchase is the chief, playing the same rôle as he had a year earlier in Doctor Who's 'The Pirate Planet'. Arthur Hewlett is his father, the second actor this season who would later appear in Who's 'Terror of the Vervoids'. What ignominy. Freudians might find some interest in the fact that here are two sons who have nobbled their father and then fallen to fighting among themselves. Much the same thing happened in Freud's story of the primal horde. Otherwise forget it.

AND SO TO 'Star One', and an episode held by many to be the series' finest. Certainly it is a significant episode. The apocalyptic tone is set right at the start with the collision of two ships and subsequent other disasters due, it seems, to Star One conking out (on video it will be more obvious than it was at the time that this sequence reappears as part of the battle in 'Aftermath'). Avon finally vents his spleen at Blake and it is apparent that, even if Star One is not destroyed, things will never be the same again, neither for the narrative or the series itself. But Blake and Co. are not the only ones with designs on Star One. Travis - remarkably since he only learned its location in the previous episode, and certainly Blake went straight there - has helped a bunch of meanies to take it over and let a battle fleet through the Federation defence zone. Blake and Travis finally get around to shooting one another but, conveniently, neither of them dies straight away. Significantly, it takes Avon to kill Travis and this, amongst other things - like the fact that it is he and not Blake that takes the Liberator into battle - establish him as the new leading force. As he predicted back in 'Pressure Point', his chance would, and has, come.

Powerful and dramatic as the episode is, it does have problems. Principle among these is the illogic of the Federation putting their most important computer installation at the nearest point to a suspected hostile power. Also the time frame does not stand up to too close examination. The episode follows directly from 'The Keeper' so when exactly did Travis strike his deal with the Andromedans? And if, as Orac states, the defence zone was built up over a long period of time and is operated from Star One, then Star One must have been there longer than the age of Lareena would indicate. In 'Pressure Point' Travis said Control had been moved thirty years ago.

But what the hell. The most serious problem is the standard of morality that Blake declares. The question of when a terrorist becomes a freedom fighter was rarely tackled in 'Blake's 7' - that's not, after all, what the series was really about - but here Blake states that unless they win, all that they have done is just "senseless killing and destruction", so it seems that if a terrorist achieves his objective he ceases to be a terrorist. Hmm. Perhaps it was as well that when the battle was done Blake would be lost and the Federation destroyed by another hand.

It was time for change.

PETER LINFORD

BACK COVER: Paul Darrow as Avon in the 'Blake's 7' episode 'The Keeper'.

AS THE SEASON for giving (and receiving!) rapidly approaches, we decided that it would be a good idea to suggest some of the very best items of merchandise currently doing the rounds which we think will make the perfect stocking fillers.

The 'Blake's 7' enthusiast can do no better than the excellent releases by BBC Video, with Season Three launching on November 4th with the issuing over two £10.99 tapes of the episodes 'Aftermath', 'Powerplay', 'Volcano' and 'Dawn of the Gods'.

For the 'Who buff, again the videos are a good buy, but only the single-pack variety and the combined 'Sontaran Experiment'/'Genesis of the Daleks' release - avoid the twin-tape rip-offs at all costs! A complete set of Timewyrm books ('Revelation' by Paul Cornell is out in early December), the Marvel Year Book and, of course, a 1992 subscription to DWB would be nice to wake up to on Christmas morning, but above all we would recommend investing in some stunning sculptures handmade by fan Philip Robinson. They beat any commercial attempt at 'Who figurines hands down and capture every detail of each subject meticulously. Philip has perfected all the Doctors but he feels that his monster replicas represent his finest work. Each one measures up to three inches in height with prices ranging from £8-15. Philip has a standard range of sculptures available, and he is always happy to tackle special commissions. Write to him c/o Fan Mail, 12 Lichfield Close, Great Lumley, Chester-le-Street, County Durham DH3 4QH.

Finally, with 'Star Trek' celebrating its 25th anniversary, several companies have issued limited edition products that represent the pinnacle of perfection, with prices to match! The Hamilton Collection have joined forces with Paramount Pictures to produce the 'Star Trek 25th Anniversary Commemorative Plate' created by 1990 'Plate of the Year' artist Thomas Blackshear. Enhanced with a lavish 8mm decorative border of 23K gold, each plate is hand-numbered and issued with a certificate of authenticity. Made from finest porcelain, every plate is limited to a total of 14 firing days and is available only direct from the manufacturer for around £30. Alternatively, if you have around £1000 to spare, you might prefer something more lavish, like 'The Official Star Trek Chess Set' from Franklin Mint. Each piece represents a particular character (i.e. Kirk is the King and Spock the Bishop) and is crafted of pewter and plated with 22 carat gold or sterling silver and set on a lead crystal base. The playing board is crafted of aluminium and glass depicting a dimensional star map - the only chess set of its kind and again available exclusively from the manufacturer! Happy shopping...

OUT OF THIS WORLD GIFT IDEAS FOR CHRISTMAS (see right . . .)

THE REBIRTH OF A LEGEND

THE EXTENSIVE Radio Times coverage and television trailors indicate that the BBC is proud of its recent acquisition, 'Thunderbirds'. Quite rightly so, for Gerry Anderson's most endearing product is surely one of the best-loved series British television has ever known.

Even when it isn't on the air the public seeks affectionate parodies in the shape of the long-running mime show (ref: DWB#90) and the recent MC Parker single. A mere two seasons twenty-five years ago have lived on in the memories of many people to an extent that makes you wonder if it ever went away at all.

It has been away, of course, and its recent high profile return marks perhaps the most significant of all its many repeat runs. The ITV network spent twenty years relegating International Rescue to early morning children's slots, whereas the BBC seems to regard their exploits with a degree of reverence becoming art. An evening slot on BBC2 - dubbed the bastion for telefantasy in the '90s - itself an arts-orientated channel, is surely indicative of this. The current run of the series (Fridays, 6pm) - the first it has ever been given on network TV - was heralded on a Radio Times cover, an extensive colour feature and a detailed write-up informing the prospective viewer that "the twenty inch puppets cost three hundred pounds each and are brought to life by wires one five-thousandth of an inch thick". Admirable research, and hardly what you'd have seen on searching through your TV Times back in the '70s. Assuming, of course, your region was even screening an episode that week!

So what's changed? The programme is the same, and Anderson's recent work has hardly afforded him a status demanding the re-examination of his career in a new light. No, the change has occurred within the BBC itself. Bar a television movie in 1976, this is the first time that the Corporation has screened any Anderson material. In screening 'Thunderbirds', they are not only indicating that they may feel that ITV has had more than its fair share of this well-loved series, but they are also displaying a canny awareness of the current nostalgia market. It's the sixties that has changed as well. However much Fanderson may enthusiastically discuss the twenty-first century, 'Thunderbirds' is as much a part of the sixties as The Beatles, The Beach Boys and Betty Boo, if you get my drift. This is why the Tracey brothers can now be seen in the evening on BBC2, and not first thing in the morning as was the case with ITV in the seventies and eighties. Scheduling-wise, the series has come full circle, but now its respectability derives from it being art, and it being representative of an era everybody seems to want to relive. Even those, like Miss Boo, who weren't around then.

So, with thirty-two episodes well underway, we can expect more of the most lavish puppet drama the Andersons ever produced. Although not nearly as technically competent as some of their later work, 'Thunderbirds' featured a wealth of delightful characters and ingenious (if often highly formularised) stories. Although Derek Meddings' effects were to become even more spectacular (indeed they are the saving grace of the recently screened Moonraker), and the Supermarionation techniques could later facilitate the effective dual filming of puppets and people, the Andersons never replicated the popularity of 'Thunderbirds'. Of course, the youngsters watching the programme now will be uncaring of this, and the fact that 2065 was exactly one hundred years in the future when it was made. They'll be enjoying the fun, which is how it should be.

However, twenty-five years on Gerry Anderson is still "the 'Thunderbird' man". Twenty-five years on everybody from Dire Straits to Exchange & Mart still want the puppets in their promotional videos. Twenty-five years on a whole new generation of kids are about to become commercial victims of a 'Thunderbirds' Christmas, just as their parents once were.

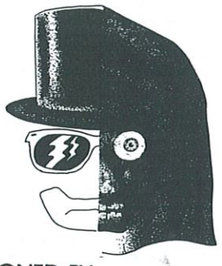
Twenty-five years on, the appeal of a 1960's show, whether it be that of art, nostalgia or pure fun, looks likely to assure its future well into the twenty-first century...

MARCUS HEARN

NEXT ISSUE: We attempt to pinpoint and define the magic that makes 'Thunderbirds' one of the timeless classics of British television...

BBC Film Club presents
an exciting science fiction video

COLIN BAKER, NICOLA BRYANT &
MICHAEL WISHER



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